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The
Advanced Study In
HISTORY
Of The
PUNJAB



VOL. I

(GURU AND POST-GURU PERIOD UPTO RANJIT SINGH)

29082

By

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*To
The Timeless
and the
Invisible Being*

PREFACE

The first volume of the Advanced Study in the History of the Punjab is out. Advanced History of the Punjab, Vol. II, dealing with Ranjit Singh and post-Ranjit Singh period was printed a few months back, when I hoped that the first volume will be out in about five months time. That hope has now been fulfilled. The present work deals with Guru and post-Guru period upto Ranjit Singh, and is full of those thrills of daring deeds and a record of self-sacrifices, the memories of which any nation would be proud to own. It shows how nations are born, and develop from infancy to maturity. If the blood of heroes is the seed of a nation, during this period enough of blood was given, which turned whole land of the five tivers red. Drums beat, bugles blew, heroes thundered, and the guns roared. The lovers of human independence, self-respect and honour, gave their blood. A seed was sown. And lo ! The seed actually sprouted. It soon grew and fructified. The growth of this plant, a nation of warriors, has been dealt with in this volume, while for its fructification and maturity, the study of the second volume, above referred to, is recommended.

Much of the study of this period of the Punjab History, involves the study of a literature based upon religious inspiration and false pride of race and belief. Not un-naturally, therefore, very often it is coloured with bias and prejudice. Fact have been mixed up with fables, and a simple history has been converted into a complicated mystery. An effort has here been made to apply a discerning eye and an impartial mind. The success or failure is before the readers, to judge. Only this much claim can be forwarded that no source has been left untapped, and no effort left unmade, to make the account as exhaustive as possible.

My sincere thanks are due, once again to the atmosphere of a serious study in the Punjab History that exists in the Ramgarhia institutions

under the able administration of Sardar Mohan Singh Hadiabadi; which inspired me to complete this work. I am thankful again to Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, who initiated the idea in my mind, for writing out this work. I am thankful to Prof, J. L. Mehta, who revised the manuscript, and gave me many valuable suggestions, to Mr. Yoginder Pal Singh, B. A., LL B., who devoted enough of his precious time and energy to make this work as much presentable as possible; and to my wife, Mrs. Sharanjit Kaur without whose help and willing co-operation, this work may not have been possible at all. And above all, I am thankful to my respected father; and to the Almighty Lord, who made me capable of writing this work.

Dated 23rd Sept., 1960.

G. S. CHHABRA
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CONTENTS

Chapter

Page

I. Political, Social, Economic and Religious Conditions in the Fifteenth and the Sixteenth Centuries	1-25
A—The Political Conditions	... ..	1
B—Social Conditions	... ..	11
C—Economic Conditions	... ..	16
D—Religious Conditions	... ..	20
II. The Bhakti Movement	... ..	26-45
A—Origin	... ..	26
B—Essential Principles of the Movement	... ..	31
C—Revival and the Reformers	... ..	32
Shankar Acharya—I	... ..	32
Ramanuj—II	... ..	35
Ramananda—III	... ..	36
Kabir—IV	... ..	38
Chaitanya—V	... ..	43
Namdev—VI	... ..	44
III. Guru Nanak	... ..	46-75
A—The Sources	... ..	46
B—The Early Life	... ..	50
C—The Udisis	... ..	61
D—The Last Years	... ..	73
IV. The Creed of Guru Nanak	... ..	76-97
A—Unity	... ..	76
B—Fraternity	... ..	91
C—The Moral Duties	... ..	96

V. Guru Nanak, A Character Estimate	... ..	98—114
Revolutionary or a Reformer	... ..	98
Sangat System	... ..	104
Other Characteristics	... ..	109
VI. Transformation and Consolidation of Sikhism		
A—Guru Angad	... ..	115—125
His Life—I	... ..	115
The Transformation—II	... ..	119
VII. Transformation and Consolidation of Sikhism		
B—Guru Amar Das	... ..	126—139
His Life—I	... ..	126
The Transformation—II	... ..	128
VIII. Transformation and Consolidation of Sikhism		
C—Guru Ram Das	... ..	140—148
His Life—I	... ..	140
The Transformation—II	... ..	142
IX. Transformation and Consolidation of Sikhism		
D—Guru Arjan	... ..	149—162
His Life—I	... ..	149
The Transformation—II	... ..	153
X. Transformation and Consolidation of Sikhism	... ..	163—174
E—The Execution of Guru Arjan	... ..	163
XI. The Adi Granth	... ..	175—195
A—The Necessity	... ..	175
B—The Collection	... ..	177

C—The Authors	... ..	181
D—Arrangement of Matter	... ..	182
E—The Nature of Contents and its Importance	... ..	185
XII. Guru Hargobind	... ..	196—226
A—The Changes	... ..	196
B—The Imprisonment	... ..	203
C—The Period	... ..	205
D—The Release	... ..	207
E—The Friendly Relations	... ..	209
F—The Open Hostilities	... ..	211
G—The Last Ten Years	... ..	217
H—A General Estimate	... ..	219
XIII. Guru Har Rai	... ..	227—232
XIV. Guru Har Krishan	... ..	233—235
XV. Guru Teg Bahadur	... ..	236—251
XVI. Guru Gobind Singh	... ..	252—278
A—The Circumstances	... ..	252
B—The Battle of Bhangani	... ..	257
C—The Battle of Nadaun	... ..	269
D—The Expedition of Khanzada	... ..	272
E—The Expedition of Hussain Khan	... ..	274
F—The Expedition of Jujhar Singh	... ..	275
G—The Expedition of Shahzada	... ..	275
H—Battle with Alam Chand and Baliala Chand	... ..	277
XVII. The Creation of Khalsa	... ..	279—292
XVIII. After the Khalsa was Created	... ..	293—311
XIX. Guru Gobind Singh, A Character Estimate	... ..	312—322
XX. Banda Bahadur	... ..	323—344

XXI. The Dark Period	...	...	345—354
XXII. The Sikhs Under Nawab Kapur Singh and the Viceroys of Lahore	...	...	355—385
A—Early Life of Kapur Singh, and Zakaryia Khan	...	...	355
B—Invasion of Nadir Shah, and Sikh Opportunity	...	...	364
C—The Punjab Under Yahia Khan	...	...	372
D—The Punjab Under Shah Nawaz Khan	...	...	376
E—The First Invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali	...	...	377
F—Kapur Singh's Estimate	...	...	384
XXIII. Muin-ul-Mulk Durrani and the Sikhs	...	...	386—396
A—Against the Sikhs	...	...	386
B—The Second Durrani Invasion	...	...	389
C—The Third Durrani Invasion	...	...	392
XXIV. Lahore Governors, Durrani and the Sikhs	...	...	397—409
A—Mughlani Begum and Confusion	...	...	397
B—The Sikh Rakhi System	...	...	401
C—Fourth Invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali	...	...	404
D—The Fate of Mughlani Begum	...	...	407
XXV. The Punjab Under Timur	...	...	410—414
XXVI. Adina Beg as a Governor, and his Career	...	...	415—427
XXVII. Maratha Exclusion and the Sikh Rise	...	...	428—439
A—After Adina	...	...	428
B—Fifth Invasion of the Durrani	...	...	429
C—The Sikh Opportunity	...	...	434

XXVIII. Contest Between Sikhs and the Durrani, And the Sikh Acquisition of Territories	...	...	440—464
A—The Sixth Durrani Invasion and the Bara Ghalughara	...	...	440
B—The Sikhs Rise Again	...	...	446
C—The Seventh Durrani Invasion	...	...	451
D—The Sikh Opportunity Again	...	...	452
E—The Eighth Durrani Invasion	...	...	454
F—The Sikh Opportunity	...	...	456
G—The Ninth and Tenth Durrani Invasions. Shah's Death, Estimate and Failure	...	...	457
XXIX. The Sikh Misls or Confederacies	...	...	465—512
1. The Ahluwalia Misl	...	...	466
2. The Bhangi Misl	...	...	472
3. The Ramgarhia Misl	...	...	480
4. The Kanheya Misl	...	...	488
5. The Fyzulpuria Misl	...	...	493
6. The Nishanwala Misl	...	...	494
7. The Shahid Misl	...	...	495
8. The Dullewalia Misl	...	...	497
9. The Nakai Misl	...	...	497
10. The Karora Singhi Misl	...	...	498
11. The Sukerchakia Misl	...	...	499
12. The Phulkian Misl	...	...	506
Patiala House—A	...	...	508
Jind House—B	...	...	511
Nabha House—C	...	...	511
XXX. The Civil And Military Administration Under the Misls	...	...	513—530
A—Character of the Misl Organisation	...	...	513
B—The Gurmatta	...	...	515
C—The Internal Administration of the Misls	...	...	517

	Economic Conditions and the Finan-		
	cial Structure—I	... ..	520
	The Judicial Administration—II	... ..	523
	D—The Military Administration	... ..	526
Appendix	I. The Sources of the		
	Punjab History	... ..	531—42
Appendix	II. The Date of Guru		
	Nanak's Birth	... ..	543—44
Appendix	III. The Punjab Under the		
	Mughals, and the Rela-		
	tions between the Mughals		
	and the Sikh Gurus	545—554
Index		555—565

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CHAPTER I

POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS IN THE FIFTEENTH AND THE SIXTEENTH CENTURIES

A—The Political Conditions

During the period of the Delhi Sultans, India saw the establishment of the worst type of theocracy in the country. All the political institutions were in theory derived from the Islamic Law and sanctioned by it. Politics seems to have been completely subordinated to religion, and the administrative fanaticism which ensued converted India into a veritable hell of persecutions and harassment.

Theocracy

When the Muslims conquered a non-Muslim country, they offered three alternatives to the vanquished people : conversion to Islam, the payment of *jazia* and death. A great many of the Hindus under the Islamic rule were converted to Islam, thousands of those who resisted were butchered and those who remained paid *jazia*, and were known as *zimmis*, or the persons who lived under guarantees.

Three alternatives

A few instances may here be quoted to show the manner in which these Sultans administered their Hindu subjects. The story of the Hindu butchery starts with the invasion of Sind by Mohamad-bin-Qasim, who demolished all the Hindu temples he came across, and put 6,000 Hindus to sword at Rewar alone. According to Taj-ul-Muasa, Kutbud Din Aibak demolished 700 temples and replaced them by mosques at Meerut, when he conquered that territory. He put 3,000 men of Banspal's family to sword and bathed the Hindu idols in their blood. At Kalinjar he put 1,32,000 Hindus to sword and sent 50,000 men and women as captives to Ghazni.

Instances

Mohamad-bin-Qasim
(712 A. D.)

Kutbud Din
Aibak
(1206—10)

According to *Twarikh-i-Ilahi* of Amir Khusro, Feroz Shah Khalji devastated the Malwa and ordered 1,000 Hindus

The Khaljis
(1290--1320)

to be butchered, and the Hindu idols to be bathed in their blood, in front of his fort every day. According to Amir Khusro, again, the Hindus could not laugh or wear good dress in the time of Allaudin Khalji.

Moh.
Tughlak
(1325—51)
Firoz
Tughlak
(1351—88)

Twarikh-i-Ilahi says that Mohamad Tughlak ordered 1,000 corpses of the Hindus to be replaced at the gates of his fort, once every twelve hours. Firuz Tughlak proved worse yet. He was a bigot and delighted in persecuting not only the Hindus but also the Shias and other Muslim heretics. He himself wrote in his autobiography, *Fatahat-i-Firuz Shahi*, that he "killed the leaders of infidelity who seduced others into terror." Further he writes: "I encouraged my infidel subjects to embrace the religion of the Prophet, and I proclaimed that everyone who repeated the creed and became a Musalman should be exempt from the *jazia*, a poll-tax. Information of this came to the ears of the people at large, and great numbers of Hindus presented themselves and were admitted to the honour of Islam."

Allaudin
Khizr

Twarikh-i-Ilahi further goes on. Allaudin Khizr built a fort at Delhi. To celebrate its completion, he ordered 13,000 notable Hindus of the city to be massacred. Their heads were placed on the walls of the fort and upon them the lamps were ordered to be lit.

Timur
(1398 A. D.)

Amir Timur put 7,52,000 Hindus to sword and burnt 29,000 of them alive. In his autobiography Timur writes that on the eve of his occupation of Delhi, he ordered a general massacre of all the Hindu prisoners in his camp. About 1,00,000, thus, were killed in a day. A Muslim chronicler writes that the orders were carried so rigorously that a pious Maulana, who never in his life had killed even a sparrow, was obliged to kill as many as 15 Hindus.

Muslim
divines

The learned Muslim divines during this period were determined to reduce the Hindus to the position of 'drawers of water and hewers of wood.' During his sojourn in India, an exponent of the Islamic Law thus wrote to Allaudin Khalji: "I have heard.....that you have degraded the Hindus to such an extent that their wives and children beg their bread at the doors of Muslims. You are, in doing so, rendering a

great service to religion. All your sins will be pardoned by reason of this single act of merit."

Besides religious persecutions, mutual warfare and factions were common among the Muslims themselves. Wars of succession were fought, nobles and provincial governors revolted, setting up independent principalities. India had to be united and re-united, and the ambitious kings had to take up the cudgel, again and again, and defend the law and order and the unity of the country.

Mutual
Warfare

Under the Lodhis

Such confused state of affairs in the political set-up of the country, continued under the Lodhi monarchs. At the time of Guru Nanak's birth in 1469, Behlol Lodhi was reigning at Delhi. Behlol succeeded to the throne in 1451, and at the time of his succession, there was disintegration all around. According to Erskin¹, the Afghan nobles regarded the Sultan as only their chief and not master. The Lodhi possessions at the time were extensive, but they were not cohesive. Provinces and *jagirs* were held by hereditary chiefs and *jagirdars* respectively, and as a result of the weakness of the Central Government, the fissiparous tendencies developed among them. And the state thus became a congeries of independent or nearly independent principalities.

Congeries

Behlol used every tact to keep his nominal suzerainty over the nobles. He never sat on his throne and never cared to make these nobles stand before him. Even during his public audience he sat on a carpet with his nobles squatted around. Still, however, the central hold on the outlying provinces continued to weaken.

Tactful

Behlol Lodhi was succeeded by Sikandar Lodhi in 1488. He was a strong man, but he could not control his nobles, several of whom revolted. They wanted to replace him by his brother, Fateh Khan.

Sikandar
(1489—1517)

*Tarikh-i-Daudi*² says Sikandar Lodhi "was famous

1. History of India under Babur and Humayun, Vol. I, p. 411.

2. See Elliott, History of India as told by its own Historians, Vol. IV, pp. 435—38.

for his liberty, honour and politeness." He was a lover of justice, and he "never omitted to devote a certain time to hear complaints in public." But his justice had its limitations in a theocratic state. For Hindus he was only a narrow-minded bigot, and they could get no justice in his reign. Guru Nanak wrote about it thus :

Narrow-
minded

Nanak

*Kings are butchers, cruelty their knife,
Justice has taken wings and fled.
Falsity prevails and the moon of truth
Is visible nowhere.
I have tired myself in searching about,
But in the darkness no path is visible.
The world is suffering an endless pain in ego.
How shall it be saved ? saith Nanak.*

Even before his succession, his temperament was known. *Tarikh-i-Daudi*¹ relates a story. Once when a crowd of Hindus assembled at Kurkshetar, he wanted to go there and put them all to death. He was dissuaded with difficulty by Mian Abdulla, the Maliku-i-Ulma, who told him that it was against the Prophet's precept. But the Prince declared in wrath : "You side with the infidels. I will first put an end to you, and then massacre the Hindus at Kurkhet." He was appeased later only with difficulty. Naturally thus, if such a Prince acceded to the throne, the Hindus could expect no relief.

Hindus at
Kurkshetar

Temples
destroyed

Farishta relates heart-rending stories of his destruction of temples in Mandril in 1504 and in Hanumangarh in 1506. In Mathura he destroyed all the temples and replaced them by caravanserais and mosques. He even deprived the Hindus of the elementary rights of citizenship by forbidding them from taking bath at the sacred river of the Jumna. Their stone images were given over to butchers for meat-weights and they were prohibited from shaving their heads and beards and barbers were ordered not to help them. The story of 'Bodhan Brahman' is well known. This unfortunate man had said that Hinduism was as good as Mohammedanism. Out of

'Bodhan
Brahman'

1. Elliott, iv, p. 447.

spite the Sultan ordered him either to embrace Islam or face death. The Brahman chose the latter.

Ibrahim Lodhi who succeeded in 1517 was worse yet. The Hindus remained dissatisfied and the Muslim nobles grew turbulent. Ibrahim wanted them to stand in front of his throne and bow before him. The nobles began to conspire to replace him by his brother Jalal Khan, but the conspiracy was crushed. It was out of distrust that Daulat Khan Lodhi, the *Governor of Lahore*, invited Babur to invade India. A triangular contest between the Mughals, the Sultan and the Pathans of Delhi thus ensued, which made confusion worse confounded.

Ibrahim
Lodhi
(1517—26)

Babur
invited

The Punjab

The Punjab being a frontier Province, and key to the Indian Empire, the religious bigotry of the Sultans was made to have its full play in this Province. Nor were the Provincial Governors themselves oblivious of the religious persecutions of the Hindus.

Yet worse

Besides religious persecutions, the administration in the Province was of the loosest type. The rulers were buried in romance and pleasures and had lost all the sense of their duty towards the people :

Loose
administra-
tion

ਸਾਹਾ ਸੁਰਿਤ ਗਵਾਈਆ ਰੰਗਿ ਤਮਾਸੈ ਚਾਇ ।

Corruption was rife and there was degradation all around. As Latif writes : "Corruption, degradation and treachery stalked openly through the market. Confusion and disorder of every kind ran riot over the length and breadth of the Empire..... Murders of the most horrible type, robberies of a most outrageous and shocking character were the order of the day. Honour, justice and position were bought and sold. The rulers of the land were sunk in voluptuousness in an abyss of enfeebling debauchery."

Corruption
and
degradation

Guru Nanak also wrote in the *War Malar ki, Mahala 1* :
"The kings have become man-eaters, their officials behave like

Man-eaters

1. See Brigg's History of the Rise of Mohammedan Power in India, p. 586.

dogs—they lick blood and eat flesh of the people.” And Bhai Gurdas said :

ਕਲ ਆਈ ਕੁਤੇ ਮੂਹੀ, ਖਾਜ ਹੋਆ ਮੁਰਦਾਰ ਗੁਸ਼ਾਈ ।
ਰਾਜੇ ਪਾਪ ਕਮਾਂਵਦੇ, ਉਲਟੀ ਵਾੜ ਖੇਤੀ ਕੋ ਖਾਈ ।
ਪਰਜਾ ਅੰਧੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਨ, ਕੂੜ ਕੁਸਤ ਮੁਖਹੁ ਅਲਾਈ ।

Those who posed as benefactors, were busy in amassing wealth by all sinful means. Love between man and woman was based on dollar ; and they met at pleasure and departed at will. The Kazis who occupied the seat of justice committed all types of crimes and administered ‘justice’ only when bribed, as Guru Nanak writes in his *Var Ramkali* :

Kazis

ਸਤੀ ਪਾਪੁ ਕਰਿ ਸਤੁ ਕਮਾਹਿ । ਗੁਰ ਦੀਖਿਆ ਘਰ ਦੇਵਣਿ ਜਾਹਿ ।
ਇਸ਼ਤੀ ਪੁਰਖੈ ਖਟਿਐ ਭਉ । ਭਾਵੈ ਆਵਉ ਭਾਵੈ ਜਾਉ ।
ਸਾਸਤ ਬੇਦ ਨ ਮਾਨੈ ਕੋਇ । ਆਪੋ ਆਪੈ ਪੂਜਾ ਹੋਇ ।
ਕਾਜੀ ਹੋਇਕੈ ਬਹੈ ਨਿਆਇ । ਫੇਰੇ ਤਸਬੀਹ ਕਰੇ ਖੁਦਾਇ ।
ਵਢੀ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਹਕ ਗਵਾਏ । ਜੇ ਕੋ ਪੁਛੇ ਤਾਂ ਪਤਿ ਸੁਣਾਏ ।

Divided

Punjab, at this time, was divided into several petty provinces or parts. Lahore and Multan were its two important provinces ; the others were Sarhind, Depalpur and Sultanpur etc., which were sometimes placed under one authority and sometimes held separately. Besides them were the Gujjars and the Gakhars of the Chaj Doab between the rivers Chenab and Jhelum, over whom the governors of the Punjab had no hold.

Tattar
Khan
supervisor

Considering the political importance of the Punjab as a bulwark of defence for India, Sikandar Lodhi had appointed Tattar Khan, a near relative of his, as a supervisor over all the Punjab Provinces and the parganas. After the death of Tattar Khan, his son Daulat Khan Lodhi, succeeded to the office, and remained loyal to Sikandar Lodhi, so long as the latter lived. After the death of the Sultan, however, Daulat Khan developed a fissiparous tendency and decided to establish a separate kingdom of his own in the Punjab. In the centre, Alam Khan Lodhi, the uncle of Ibrahim Lodhi, was maturing his plans to overthrow the Sultan and occupy the throne

Daulat
Fissiparous

Alam Khan

himself. He often visited the Punjab and discussed his plans with Daulat Khan thus making a common cause with him.

The intelligence of these intrigues reached Ibrahim and he wrote to Daulat Khan to come and see him at Delhi. Daulat Khan sensed the risk and instead of going himself sent his son Dilawar Khan to Delhi. Dilawar Khan was badly received, but he escaped imprisonment and related the story of what had happened, to his father. This precipitated the matter, and to retaliate, Daulat Khan invited Babur to invade India with a promise to give him every aid against the Delhi Sultan. Babur did accept the invitation and invaded India bringing in his train havoc and destruction. Peaceful citizens were butchered by the invading forces. Thousands of the Punjabi women were captured and put to all sorts of ignominy. Those, who enjoyed the richest of luxuries and lived the most comfortable life, were subjected to most heinous treatment; and dust was thrown upon their heads. Guru Nanak relates the painful story in his words as under :

Dilawar
badly
treated

Babur
invited

Destruction

ੴ ਜਨ ਸਿਰ ਸੋਚਨ ਪਟੀਆ,
ਮਾਂਗੀ ਪਾਏ ਸੰਧੂਰ ।
ਸੋ ਸਿਰ ਕਾਤੀ ਮੁਨੀਅਨ,
ਗਲ ਵਿਚ ਆਵਹਿ ਧੂਰਿ ।

As a result of Babur's invasion, the politics of the Punjab became yet more complicated and thus peace of the country was destroyed. A separate account may be given of Babur's invasion and the triangular contest which resulted therefrom.

More
complicated

Babur's Invasion

Before finally occupying the country, Babur had invaded the Punjab several times. His first invasion was in 1504, when he occupied Kohat. He invaded in 1519 for the second time. He writes in his memoirs, he found his hands free once again, and invaded Bhira, the border land of India held by Ali Khan, the son of Dault Khan. His intention at this time was to shed as little blood as possible, and from his memoirs we learn that he issued

1st, 1504
2nd, 1519

Little blood-
shed

special instructions to his soldiers to keep discipline and not to bring about unnecessary destruction. He even punished some who contravened his orders.

Envoy to
Ibrahim

After conquering Bhira, Babur sent an envoy to Ibrahim Lodhi "intimating that the dominions of the Punjab had so frequently been in the possession of his ancestors that it behoved the king of Delhi to give up his pretensions to that province, and thus avert the calamities of a war."¹ The envoy, however, returned unsuccessful.

Unsuccess-
ful

Gakhars
chastised

Having subdued the country as far as Chenab and having chastised the Gakhars, Babur withdrew to Kabul, appointing Hussan Beg Atka as governor of the conquered territories.

3rd, 1519

Towards the close of the same year he led another expedition towards India. Uzufzais, trying to check his advance, were beaten away. After settling the border affairs, Babur was just to march towards the Indus when he got the news that Sultan Sayad, the king of Kashgar, had invaded Badakshan. He was, therefore, compelled to withdraw once again.

4th, 1520

In 1520, Babur again marched into India. Sialkot capitulated, and was saved from destruction and plunder. At Sayadpur, however, Babur faced some resistance, with the result that his old intentions to shed as little blood as possible seem to have changed; and he entered into a barbarous retribution. Entire garrison at Sayadpur was massacred in cold blood, and the inhabitants of the place were butchered and carried away into slavery. Wealth and beauty of the women proved to be their bane, and they were forcibly taken away and dishonoured; as Guru Nanak wrote at the painful sight:

Massacre

ਧਨ ਜੋਬਨ ਦੁਇ ਵੈਰੀ ਹੋਇ,
ਜਿਨੀ ਰਖੇ ਰੰਗ ਲਾਏ ।
ਦੂਤਾਂ ਨੇ ਫੁਰਮਾਇਆ,
ਲੇ ਚਲੇ ਪਤ ਗਵਾਇ ।

Terrible

At another place again, Guru Nanak tries to depict the terrible scene of the destruction brought about by Babur's

1. Latif, pp. 122—123.

forces. The sports, stables, horses, bugles and clarions all vanished in a moment's time. Horses, mansions, palaces and beautiful seraglios were destroyed. Beautiful women whose sight banished sleep met the most horrible fate. Foolish indeed it was that millions of priests, instead of going to the battlefield and fighting the invaders, cried before their idols and tried to restrain the enemy by their miraculous power, but their stone gods failed to protect them. If a tyrant slew a tyrant, there was nothing to be objected to. But here a ravening lion fell on a herd, and its master, the Lodhi dogs, showed no manliness¹.

The priests

Babur had entered this time into the Punjab in all his fury and his object was to take Lahore. But in the midst of his activities, he received the intelligence that Kabul had been invaded by an army from Kandhar, and he, therefore, was compelled once again to retreat to his own country.

Compelled to retreat

Fifth Campaign

The fifth campaign was led by Babur in 1524, at the joint invitation of Daulat Khan Lodhi and Alam Khan Lodhi. When Ibrahim learnt of it, he sent his general Behar Khan Lodhi, who defeated Daulat Khan in a battle; and the latter, after this, took refuge among the Biluchis. Behar Khan, along with Mobarak Khan Lodhi and Bhikan Khan Lohani, marched then at the head of his army, and tried to oppose the march of Babur towards Lahore, in the country of Gakhars; but failed. In a sanguinary battle in the plains of Lahore, Babur defeated his enemy after a great slaughter, and made his triumphant entry into the city, where the houses were set on fire and whence great plunder was carried by his soldiers after the fashion common to Babur's tribe. And all the high and low, the criminals and innocents, suffered alike.

In 1524

Behar Khan

Defeated

Destruction at Lahore

After his four days' stay in Lahore, Babur marched against Depalpur, where he put the entire garrison to the sword. Here he was joined by Daulat Khan along with his three sons. After this Babur distributed the conquered territories among some of the chiefs like Daulat Khan and Alaudin Alam Khan.

To Depalpur

Territories distributed

1. Guru Nanak, Adi Granth, Asa.

Daulat
revolted

But against Daulat Khan's wishes, he was given only the Doaba of Jullundur and Sultanpur, with the result that he revolted, but, being defeated, he fled to the hills. Babur handed over his territory to his son Dilawar Khan, and asked him to pursue his father in the hills and arrest him. But after Babur's retreat, Daulat Khan came down from the hills and defeated both Dilwar Khan and Alam Khan.

Alam to
Kabul

Alam Khan, being thus defeated, fled straight to Kabul and invited Babur to march on India once again. But the scene soon changed. By an agreement between Babur and Alam Khan, Alam Khan got letters addressed to the Mughal *Sardars* in the Punjab, to help him secure the crown of Delhi. A compromise was also reached between Alam Khan and Daulat Khan, the latter agreeing to help the former in the venture, in the secret hope that as a result of this war, he would see both Ibrahim and Alam Khan weakened and would thus draw an advantage from the situation. In the clash that followed between Ala-ud-din Alam Khan and Ibrahim Lodhi, the former was defeated and encouraged with this, Daulat Khan beat the Mughal *Sardars* out of the Punjab.

Comprom-
ise

Alam de-
feated

The Sixth Expedition

In 1525

This precipitated the 6th invasion of Babur, who crossed the Indus once again on December 15, 1525. Daulat Khan fled to Malot in the Hoshiarpur District, where Babur pursued him. Daulat Khan, according to Babur's memoirs, submitted and was pardoned. He was sent to Bhira, where he died shortly after.

At Panipat

Babur marched with his forces towards Delhi. The Imperial army met him at Panipat, but about sixteen thousands of the Afghan army, which consisted of 1,00,000 horse and 100 elephants, were slain in the battlefield, and the rest all fled. Babur was able to perform this wonder with his only 13,000 horse. Babur "made his triumphant entry into Delhi, on 22nd April, 1526, when the *Khutba* was read in his name by Sheikh Zia-ud-din, of Delhi".

Delhi
occupied

This period of the Punjab history, was terrible in destruction and bloodshed. Tears of blood ran down the eyes of Guru Nanak, who saw the havoc brought about by Babur. Referring to Babur as a bridegroom, who had come from Kabul with a party of sins, and demanded forcibly the gift of the bride—the Indian Empire, the Guru said: "Modesty and righteousness all vanished, and falsehood held the chief authority. In the plunder, both the Hindus and the Muslims were treated alike. The Muslim women read the Quran, and in agony called upon God for help. And so did the Hindu women. There was a bloodshed all around¹."

Tears of
Blood

B—Social Conditions

The society at this time was divided into two major sections, the Hindus and Muslims. The Muslims were the favoured children of the state, while the Hindus, under the Muslim theocratic state, were treated as no better than *parihas*.

Two parts

The Hindus paid various taxes because of the faith they possessed. They had to pay *jazia*; and pilgrimage tax for visiting their own religious places. The story of their persecution has already been told. But the worst thing was that among the Hindus themselves there were divisions of the most deplorable kind.

Hindus

Divided

They were not only divided into four main castes of the Brahmins, Kshatris, Vaishas and the Shudras, but these four castes were further divided into sections and sub-sections, each of which was placed in a water-tight compartment. Dault Rai explains the differences among these people in a very beautiful manner. He says that these people, the members of the different castes and sections, had neither one religion, nor one desire. Their standards of morality were not the same, their worlds were different,

Sub-divided

1. See Adi Granth, Rag Tilang, M. 1, (1)

ਜੇਸੀ ਮੈਂ ਆਵੇ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਥਾਣੀ, ਤੈਸੜਾ ਕਰੀਂ ਗਿਆਨ, ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ ॥ ਪਾਪ ਕੀ ਜੰਜ ਲੈ ਕਾਬਲਹੁ ਧਾਇਆ, ਜੋਰੀ ਮੰਛੀ ਦਾਨ, ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ.....;

See also, Asa, M. 1.

The differ-
ences

their languages were different. They differed in behaviours, they differed in their dresses, they differed in modes of living, they differed in their pleasures, differed in sorrows, differed in hopes, differed in temperaments, differed in customs, in habits, in their food and in their sympathies. Their heavens were different and their hells were different. They differed in everything, and were one in none.

Discrimi-
natory
treatment

The Brahmin quite submissive to his Muslim neighbour was tyrannical to his own Sudra brothers. The discriminatory treatment meted out by the higher castes to the so-called lower castes is best depicted by Nam Dev who, being pushed out from a temple, where only high-castes could worship, cried, 'This Brahmin calls me a low-caste, and calling me Sudra, he beats me out.'

ਇਹ ਪੰਡੀਆ ਮੋਹਿ ਕਢਿ ਢੇਢੁ ਕਹਿਤ ਹੈ,
ਸੂਦਰ ਸੂਦਰ ਕਰ ਮਾਰਿ ਭਗਾਇਓ

Kabir also mentioned it : 'How art thou a Brahman ? How am I Sudra ? How am I of blood and you of milk.'

Beliefs and
prejudices

The people had their worthless beliefs and prejudices. From birth to death, they were burdened with expensive ceremonies, which must be performed whether one could make one's both ends meet or not. Alchemy, incantation and spells were believed in and practised.

The habits

There was corruption and degradation in their habits. The evils of gambling and the use of intoxicants were common. The life was deceitful and full of dishonesty. Jealousy, gossip and tittle-tattle were freely indulged into. As Bhai Gurdass writes :

ਖੁਦੀ ਬਖੀਲੀ ਤਕੱਥਰੀ, ਖਿਚੋਤਾਣ ਕਰੇਣ ਧਿਛਾਣੇ ।
ਬੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਫੁਲਾਇਕੇ, ਮੋਹੇ ਲਾਲਚ ਦਨੀ ਸ਼ੈਤਾਣੇ ।
ਸਚ ਕਿਨਾਰੇ ਰਹਿ ਗਿਆ, ਖਹਿ ਮਰਦੇ ਬਾਹਮਣ ਮੱਲਾਣੇ ।

Babur's
view

Babur himself wrote in his *Tauzak-i-Babri*, "The people are not handsome. They have no idea of charms of friendly society ; they have no genius for mechanical invention, no skill or knowledge in design and architecture." Majority of the

people lived naked, wearing only a loin-cloth.

The position occupied in the society by the women was degrading. If the standard of a society is determined by the position a woman occupies in it, the less said regarding this period of our History, the better. Some proverbs of the time are known :—

The women

ਅੰਦਰ ਬੈਠੀ ਲਖ ਦੀ

ਬਾਹਰ ਗਈ ਕਖ ਦੀ

That is, a woman must be confined to her home and hearth, and the less she moves out, the better.

Confined to home

Again :

ਤਰੇ ਕੰਮ ਖਰਾਬ,

ਮਰਦ ਨੂੰ ਚਕੀ,

ਸੰਭੇ ਨੂੰ ਗਾਹ

ਤੇ ਰਨ ਨੂੰ ਰਾਹ

The woman was considered to be equal in status to a man's shoe. She was a domestic slave and simply an agreeable blunder of nature. Even the great poets of the time such as Pulu, would say : ਭਠ ਰੰਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਖੁਰੀ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਤ । (cursed be the friendship of the women, whose sense lies in their heels.)

The status

The birth of a girl was never looked upon with favour. And several high-castes, such as the Rajputs, committed female infanticide. And for procuring a son, a woman would go even to the extent of killing another woman's son with a discreditable belief that if a woman needing a son, killed another woman's son with a bronze knife, in a particular manner causing as much pain as possible, and bathed on the dead body, the spirit of the boy would pass on to the woman's womb and thereby fulfil her purpose. The belief seems to have prevailed from early times and an interesting story is told in this connection.

Female infanticide

Procurement of a son

It is said that sometime in our History, a king ruled here, who had no son. Believing in this method of procuring a son, he caused it to be announced that anybody who

A story

gave his son to be killed by the queen for the purpose, would be granted a rich reward. The parents of a dumb and lame boy were found ready for the transaction. But when their son was going to be killed by the queen, the boy suddenly got his voice and uttered the following words :

ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾ ਧੰਨ ਦੇ ਲੋਥੀ, ਰਾਜਾ ਕਦ ਕਦਾਰਨੀ,
ਦੇਵ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਬਲ ਦੇ ਲੋਥੀ, ਅਰਥ ਕਿਸ ਪਾਸ ਪੁਗਾਰਨੀ ॥

*Father and mother are greedy of wealth,
King considers himself alone !
Gods and goddesses are greedy of offerings,
To whom shall I make my plaint ?*

Married
young
Polygamy

Trade

Prostitution

Widow

Sati

Purdah

Artificiality

The
Muslims

No better

Divided

The girls were generally married at a young age, and polygamy was in vogue among rich people. On the frontiers of the Punjab, there was an open trade in women, and the women were measured and sold under different standards. Several terms were in vogue regarding the qualities of the women which fetched the sale-money, e. g., the *kali aurat*, the *bhuri aurat* etc. Prostitution was rampant, and the profession of dancing girls who quenched the thirst of the greedy and lustful eyes was profitable and was patronised by those who should be the censors of the public morals.

Widow-marriage was tabooed and the *Sati* system, under which the women committed themselves to fire along with the body of their dead husbands, was an essential part of the life of many. *Purdah* system, which had been brought into India by the Mohammedans, was prevalent.

The real values of life had been forgotten. There was artificiality everywhere. Fanaticism, aberration and hooliganism were the order of the day.

Nor were the Muslims better in any way, in their social beliefs and practices. They might have brought into India a better society in certain respects, when they came into this country, but as they intermixed with the Hindus, the evils of each other were copied, while the merits were forgotten.

They were divided into three classes : the Upper, the

Lower and the Slaves. The Upper class such as the Amirs and the Maulvis etc. were organisers in times of war, while in times of peace, they were pleasure-hunters. They kept many wives and led a life of luxury and depravity.

Upper

The Lower class consisted of the peasantry and the minor officials. Though not equal in status to the Upper class, they were the favoured sons of God as compared to the Hindus. At the lowest rung of the Muslim society were the Slaves. But even to them, sometimes, a better treatment was given than to the Hindus.

Lower

Slaves

Religious fanaticism prevailed amongst all the three, while character and discipline were of the loosest among the upper class.

Fanaticism
Character

The food of the people varied according to the status and position of a man in the society. The Hindus were generally *vaishnavas* or vegetarians, while the Muslims were meat-eaters. In the upper strata of the society as many as fifty different kinds of dishes could be prepared and taken, but the lowest section of the society were content with simple bread and some salt on it. Bread was an essential thing :

The food

Distinction

ਪੇਟ ਭਰੀਆਂ ਰੋਟੀਆਂ, ਤੇ ਸਭੇ ਗਲਾਂ ਮੋਟੀਆਂ ।

ਪੇਟ ਨਾ ਪਈਆਂ ਰੋਟੀਆਂ, ਤੇ ਸਭੇ-ਗਲਾਂ ਖੋਟੀਆਂ ।

But the special dishes, sweet as well as the saltish, were the privilege of the few.

The staple food consisted of the grain grown in the locality. Well-to-do people ate wheat and rice, while ordinary peasant's food consisted of wheat, barley, and gram in summer, and maize in winter. The poorer classes used inferior grains such as china (*Panicum miliaceum*), mandua (*Eleusine coracana*) and jowar (*great millet*) etc.

Staple
food

There were great many evil beliefs attached to the food amongst the ignorant masses of the Hindus ; the worst was that of pollution. If a person carrying food happened to touch an end of a log of wood, the other end of which was held by a low-caste or a Muslim, the food got polluted and became unfit for use.

Beliefs

Intoxicants

Intoxicants, such as wine, were used. They were more common among the Muslims, among whom the women also partook of them. Opium was freely used by Rajputs, while Sanyasis, yogis and religious mendicants, both Hindu and Mohammedan, used hemp (*Bhang*). The common beverages were *lassi* (butter-milk), *kachi lassi* (water mixed with milk and sugar), country *sherbets*, and *sardai* (a cooling drink made by bruising certain moistened ingredients in a mortar) ; but the use of the last two was almost entirely confined to the townsfolk

Beverages

C—The Economic Conditions

Physical factors

The fundamental influence of physical factors on the social and economic life of a country need not be laboured. It is obvious that they are the prime determinants of the produce of a country, the occupations of the people, and the density and distribution of the population. The Punjab, in a very special sense, was the frontier province of India, and guarded the gateway of that Empire. Stretching northwards up to, and beyond, the great peaks of the central Himalayas, and embracing the Tibetan valleys of Lahul and Spiti, it included in its eastern districts a portion of the *Hindustan*, on its southern border it encroached upon the great prairies of Rajputana, while its trans-Indus territory belonged to Afghanistan and Baluchistan rather than to India in every respect other than political. The diversity which marked its physical and geographical aspects was no less characteristic of the races which inhabited it, and of their economic life.

Geographical position

In its geographical position the Punjab was hardly lucky enough. It was in fact a very densely-populated tract thrust north-west-ward into a very sparsely-populated area. On the north lay Kashmir, Ladakh and Tibet and beyond these again the deserts of Turkistan. On the west were Afghanistan and Baluchistan and beyond these Persia. On the south lay Bikaner and Rajputana, comparatively sparsely-populated and undeveloped. None of these countries, therefore, provided a valuable market for the Punjab produce. On the eastern side lay the districts of the modern Uttar Pradesh.

But they were so similar in soil, climate and people that they rather competed with the Punjab for customers.

Second only in importance to the geographical factors in their effect upon the economic potentialities of the Punjab was the fact that the major portion of the province contained a deep alluvial soil, which possessed great fertility and required very little artificial drainage. And in this respect, the province was lucky.

The Punjab enjoyed two well-marked seasons of rainfall. The monsoon season, which brought it by far the greater portion of its annual supply, lasted from the middle of June to the middle or end of September; and upon it depended the autumn crops and spring sowings. The winter rains which fell early in January, though sometimes insignificant in amount, effected very materially the prospects of the spring harvest.

Besides, there were the five great rivers, the Sutlej, the Beas, the Ravi, the Chenab, and the Jhelum. These rivers had often changed their course, rising and receding, and leaving wide expanses of fertile loam or less fertile sand, moist for the hand of the cultivator. In addition to this, almost every dynasty which ruled this country, had done something towards the construction of canals. But irrigation by wells was not very much common at this time¹.

The principal crops in spring were wheat, gram and barley. Wheat was a staple crop, and as many as twelve samples of red and sixty-two of white wheat were known. Next to wheat was gram, which was sown as a rule in poorer and unirrigated lands. Many samples of generally good quality of barley were sown. The staple cereals in autumn were maize, great-millet (*jowar*), spiked millet (*bajra*), and rice.

Of the fibres, cotton was by far the most important, but uncertainty of seasons which prevailed in the Punjab was a check to its becoming a cotton-growing country.

The rivers

Canals

Wells

The crops

The Fibres

1. Author's 'Social and Economic History of Punjab' (Ready)

Of other important fibres were hemp and flax. *Saccharum munja*, Dab or panni (*Eragrostio cynosuroides*), Kaskas (*Andropogon muricatum*), Bagar (*Andropogon*), Parali (*Dryza sativa*), Mut (*Caren indica*), Dib, rivi (*Typhaangustipolia*), some liliaceous plants and palms were also said to make ropes, snow-shoes and such other articles.

Sugar cane
Spices

Sugar-cane was sown, and was the source of sugar in the country. Of the spices, chillies were important. Ginger was grown in the hills. Several oil-seeds were also grown.

Oil-seeds

Fauna

Fauna of the Punjab was richer and more varied than its flora. Mahommedans ate the flesh of sheep, goat, cow and fowls, and the low-caste Hindu did not scruple to eat flesh, except that of the cow, although he could not usually afford a meat diet. High-caste Hindu ate no flesh, not even fish or eggs. Most of the hill tribes ate whatever game they could catch and food of the vagrant and criminal tribes was usually fox, jackal, lizard, tortoise and such other unclean animals. Milk, curds and ghee were commonly consumed. Birds of the country were also numerous and of great variety. But a good economic use was not made of all these resources. In the products of the animal kingdom, the profession of working in leather was considered to be unclean, and the workers in it were of low caste. Religious prejudice combined with lack of scientific imagination, was responsible for an enormous wastage of animal products. Animal bone and horn, hoofs of cattle and guts of bullocks etc. were generally thrown away. Cow-dung was used as fuel, and its use as manure was very little made.

The products

Minerals

The Punjab was not rich in minerals; and almost all its mineral wealth was found in the hills, the only products of the alluvium being *kankar* or nodular limestone, saltpetre, carbonate of soda, and sal-ammoniac.

The population

The ethnical type in the Punjab was distinctly Aryan, there being few traces of aboriginal or foreign blood, if the Tibetan element in the extreme north-west be excluded. Flower of the population was *Jat*, and he was generally an agriculturist, which was one of the causes of the agricultural

Jats

richness of the country. He was not easily controllable, and assumed a major role, whenever there was disorder and disaffection in the country.

ਜਟ ਫਟ ਬਿਨ ਬੋਧਿਆਂ ਨਾ ਆਵੇ ਰਸ ।

The Punjab was mainly an agricultural country, over half of its total population being employed in it. But the agricultural methods were primitive. The advantages of frequent ploughing were thoroughly recognized, as the proverb runs :

Agricultural

Ploughing

ਜਿਤਨਾ ਹਲ Or *The more the ploughings,*
ਉਤਨਾ ਫਲ *The better the crop.*

Yet, the plough used remained an implement of simple construction, made of wood with an iron share and drawn by a single yoke of oxen. Importance of the selection of better seeds was also realised as :

Seeds

ਬੀਂ ਚੁਨੇ Or *Select your seed and you*
ਫਸਲ ਸੁਨੇ *Will get a golden crop.*

And :

ਇਕ ਪਾਈ ਮੁਠੀ Or (Sowing) broadcast produces one *pai*
ਤੇ ਚਾਰ ਪਾਈ ਨਾਲੀ (measure)
(Sowing) by nali gives four.

Principles of the rotation of crops were also understood. And the Punjab peasant would often say :

Rotation

ਦਾਲਨ ਰਾਜਾ Or *The manure is to the field,*
ਮਾਲਨ ਖੇਤੀ *What the army is to a king.*

Manures

And :

ਖਾਟ ਕਰੇ Or *Manure does the work,*
ਯਾ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਕਰੇ *Or the God does.*

Yet the cultivators' knowledge of the sources of manures was imperfect and the best manure like the cow-dung, was used rather as a fuel.

Over half of the total population of the country, as referred to above, was employed in agriculture. Majority of the rest were occupied in petty industries or were petty Government Officials. Only a small number were rich, and they

Two classes

were fabulously so. Some occupied high offices in the State, and they too rolled in wealth, with all their regular and irregular income. The middle class was almost unknown. Among the rich, there was no difference between the Hindus and the Muslims. Both were exploiters and robbed the poor.

The industry

Absence of peace in the province, owing to its being a frontier province, and subject therefore to repeated invasions, made it impossible for the industry to develop. The industry was mainly confined to villages, where the local needs were satisfied by the local manufacturers ; or it was found in the capital cities, where it was owned, in a majority of cases, by the State, and catered to the needs of the civil and military personages. Sculpture and craftsmanship were highly developed and Babur praised them.

The trade

Trade also was not in any way highly developed. There was no outlet to the sea. The country was landlocked and surrounded, as referred to above, by sparsely-populated territories. Only on the east, in the Western districts of modern Uttar Pradesh, was there some possibility of consumption of the Punjab produce, but the produce of these districts being the same, they rather competed with the Punjab. The most important trade was the one in horses, with the neighbouring Muslim countries.

No banks

There were no banks to finance trade or industry. Bankers, or money-lenders, who were generally Hindus and who realised high rates of interest did the job, but it was only to a limited extent.

Over-all picture

Yet, however, the over-all picture was that, the Punjab was a rich province and was supposed to be the granery of the Northern India. The Lodhi Government collected as much as three crores of rupees from here, as the yearly revenue. What made the general mass of the people poor was the uneven distribution of its wealth. The rich were too rich and the poor too poor.

D—The Religious Conditions.

In the religious practices of the time, the national stand-

ard had fallen to the lowest depth of absurdity. Thus wrote Bhai Gurdas : Absurdity

*Four races and four creeds were in the world
'mongst Musalmans and Hindus,
And all were uniformly, selfish jealous, proud.
Hindus by the Ganga at Benaras, and by the distant
Ka'bah Musalmans.
Muslims Rahim, and Hindus Ram implore, and miss the
way that leads to either god ;
Forgetful of the Vedas and the Quran, the present age's
snares entangle them.
Truth stood idly by, the while unwanted, as Brahman
priests and Muslim Mullas clashed.
And there was no salvation for the world¹.*

Three types of persons controlled the religions—the Qazis, The con-
trollers
the Brahmins and the Yogis. But all these persons had lost The Qazi
their characters and misbehaved themselves. The Qazi occupied
the seat of justice, he counted beads and repeated the Name
of God,—while he accepted bribes and passed unjust orders,
and when questioned, he quoted the scripture.

The Brahmin, according to Kabir, wore a loin-cloth, Brahmins
three and a half yards long and a sacrificial thread of three
strands. He carried a rosary on his neck and a glittering
brass utensil in his hand. But in his character, he was not a
saint, but a cheat. He deemed himself pure, but carried false
tales to persecute his brother.

The Yogis kept wives and grew plaits of hair and Yogis
rubbed ashes. Surrounded by the cries of their bastard
children, they called themselves moralists and cried Gorakh,
Gorakh, as Guru Nanak wrote in his Var Ramkali :

ਕਾਜੀ ਹੋਇਕੈ ਬਹੈ ਨਿਆਇ । ਫੇਰੇ ਤਸਬੀਹ ਕਰੇ ਖੁਦਾਇ ।
ਵਡੀ ਲੈਕੈ ਹਕ ਗਵਾਏ । ਜੇ ਕੋ ਪੁਛੇ ਤਾਂ ਪੜਿ ਸੁਣਾਇ ।
ਤੁਰਨ ਮੰਤਕ ਕਨਿ ਰਿਦੈ ਸਮਾਇ । ਲੋਕ ਮੁਹਾਵਹਿ ਚਾੜੀ ਖਾਹਿ ।
ਚਉਕਾ ਦੇਕੈ ਸੁਚਾ ਹੋਇ । ਐਸਾ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਵੇਖਹੁ ਕੋਇ

ਜੋਗੀ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਜਟਾ ਬਿਭੂਤ । ਅਗੇ ਪਾਛੇ ਰੋਵਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਤਿ ।

ਜੋਗ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ਜੁਗਤ ਗਵਾਈ । ਨਿਤੁ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਸਿਰ ਛਾਈ ਪਾਈ ।

ਨਾਨਕ ਕਲਿ ਕਾ ਇਹ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ । ਆਪੇ ਆਖਣ ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣ ॥

Byragis,
Sanyasis

Besides there were among the Hindus, the Byragis and the Sanyasis. They coloured their clothes to adopt the garb of their orders. They wore a surplice of worn-out cloth and a bag to receive the alms in. And they went from door to door abegging, without being humble. They assumed the role of teachers, but exploited and misled the people, as they themselves were misled.

Misled

Like cranes

All these so-called religious leaders performed their twilight devotions, argued, sat like cranes, and uttered falsehood as excellent jewels.

The Kshatryas

Nor had the Kshatryas a stable faith. Their faith changed with the change in circumstances, as Cunningham wrote : "The rude Kshatrya warrior became a political chief, with objects of his own, and ready to prefer one hierarchy or one divinity to another."

The people

Worshippers

Below the leaders, the people themselves had the worst of beliefs. Among the Hindus, the one, according to Daulat Rai, was the worshipper of Ganesh, the other of Sun. The third was the worshipper of Shiva, the fourth of Vishnu, fifth of Ram, sixth of Krishna, seventh of Hanuman, eighth of Brahma, ninth of Lachhman, tenth of Shankar Acharya, eleventh was a *Vedanti* and the twelfth a *Karmkandi*.

Rival gods

Millions of gods and goddesses were created, each one having his or her votaries ; and says Cunningham : "In a short time the gods were regarded as rivals and their worshippers as antagonists¹." It was supposed that one god did not like the worship of another, and hence, the votaries of one god, in order to appease their benefactor, had to show a hatred against the votaries of another.

God imprisoned.

The gods and the goddesses had been imprisoned into the temples. A person committing all sorts of sin outside, thought it essential to abstain from them in the temple, lest

1. 'History of the Sikhs,' p. 27.

the god within might be displeased. The principles of the omnipresence and the omnipotence of God had become points only of philosophical disputation, confined only to the learned. For a common man, it was sufficient to go to a place of worship and bow before his god, with which his religious and moral duty ended. Thus according to Nam Dev : 'The Hindus are blind, Musalmans, purblind.....the Hindus worship their temple, the Musalmans their mosque.' The reality about God had been forgotten.

Idolatry of the most deplorable kind prevailed. The system of pilgrimages was gathering importance. After a life-time of crimes and corruption, a simple dip in the Ganges was supposed to be sufficient to wash one of the consequences.

Idolatry
Pilgrimages

According to Dr. G. C. Narang, "The condition of the Hindus in the Punjab was, in fact, most deplorable. The popular religion.....was confined to peculiar forms of eating and drinking, peculiar ways of bathing and painting the foreheads and other such mechanical observances.....the centuries of invasion, foreign misrule and persecution had produced the greatest depression and the spiritual subjection and stagnation had aggravated the demoralisation to an enormous degree.¹"

Popular
Hindu
religion

They committed countless thefts, countless adulteries, and uttered countless words of abuse, yet they wore the cotton thread (*janeu*) as a symbol of good character, and killed a goat at the wearing ceremony².

People earned money using all sorts of means dishonest as well as immoral, and without any compunction. They purchased gifts with foul means and offered them to their dead ancestors. Guru Nanak at one place humorously wrote that supposing it were true that the gifts did reach the ancestors, how would such ancestors fare if the gifts reaching them were recognized by some other deceased person, also living in the same higher or lower region, to whom they

To ances-
tors

1. Transformation of Sikhism.
2. Guru Nanak, Adi Granth.

legitimately belonged? The giver's ancestors would then be seized as swindlers¹:

ਜੇ ਮੋਹਾਕਾ ਘਰ ਮੁਹੈ । ਘਰ ਮੁਹਿ ਪਿਤ੍ਰੀ ਦੇਇ,
ਅਗੇ ਵਸਤੁ ਸਿਵਾਣੀਐ, ਪਿਤ੍ਰੀ ਚੋਰ ਕਰੇਇ ।

Sanskrit
literature

Caste
system

Rituals

The original Hindu religion was available only in the Sanskrit literature, and was therefore not approachable to the common man. The evil of the caste system had declared majority of the Indian population as untouchables. The complicated rituals and rites had made the Hindu religion more expensive.

Simplicity
of Islam

Against all this was the simplicity of Islam, which instead of believing in many gods of dubious nature, preached the simple faith in one God. It believed in the brotherhood of Muslims, and no caste system, thus making itself attractive to the low-caste Hindus. John Gunther writes in his 'Inside Asia', that Islam was able to get a very easy success in Africa, because it was quite within the capability of the common man to understand. In India, too, it was bound, along with its proselytizing spirit, to have its effect, which is obvious from the fact that the Hindus began to be converted to this faith even as early as the close of the 9th century A. D. When Masudi came to India, in 916 A. D., he found many Mohammedans inhabiting the western coast of India, from which side the Arabs had come¹. Just about this time, the king of a southern state was also converted to Islam, which, coupled with the corruption in the Buddhist practices, led Shankar Acharya to revive the Bhakti Movement in the South.

Conversions

Islam
corrupted

Originally, the Islam, as it came into India, was purer in form, but as time passed, and as the Muslims came into contact with the Hindus, there were actions and reactions. Islam followed the principle of Brahmanism and among them the holy classes of Sheikhs and the Saiyids were created. Islam created customs against customs, and opinions against opinions.

1. See Elloit & Dowson, Vol. I, Translation of extracts from Masudi.

The ambition of Muhamad had been to establish the worship of one God. But his followers, had so many *pirs* and *faqirs* to worship. The idol worship had been *condemned* in the Islam, yet the Muslims did worse than this by adoring the graves. The Quran also began to be worshipped as the Vedas.

Muslims

There was thus a complete break-down of the moral standards in the 15th century ; and religion instead of being a force against it, had become a simple hoax. True religion had been forgotten, yet the Hindus and the Muslims fought claiming the superiority of one religion upon the other. Such was the degradation.

A hoax

CHAPTER II

THE BHAKTI MOVEMENT

A—The Origin

When the world is in distress, it heartily prayeth.

The true One attentively listeneth and with his kind disposition granteth consolation.

He giveth orders to the Cloud and the rain falleth in torrents.

Thus wrote Guru Amar Das. "That is, the Guru comes by God's order and gives abundant instruction to all who may be prepared to receive it."¹

The Political, Social, Economic and Religious conditions in the Punjab in the 15th and the early part of the 16th centuries have been discussed in the first chapter. All these were the factors which prepared the ground for the Bhakti Movement and ultimately for Sikhism in the Punjab. This degeneration in the entire structure, was in fact, not a malady confined only to the Punjab, it was at this time a part of the general life in India and Europe as well. The malady had been growing for centuries together, and as the climax reached, and as the entire social structure was on the verge of a general break-down, thinking minds in the society were aroused from their slumber

Both in India and in Europe, the state of affairs as it was, it made the fifteenth century, a period of singular mental activity. Men "shook off the torpor of ages, and their minds awoke to the consciousness of intellectual responsibility. For this result, it is true, important preparations had been made in the fourteenth century, when the Christian reformers, Walter Lollard and John Huss, preached

1. Macauliffe, 'The Sikh Religion', Vol. 1, p. xli.

and suffered death for their opinions; when the poetical literature of England assumed a tangible form from the genius of Chaucer and Gower; when the Musalmans in Europe penetrated into Thrace and Hungary; and when, after the overthrow and expulsion of Buddhism from India by the astute and powerful Brahmans, there flourished the exponents of Indian monotheism, the saint Kabir and the enlightened Ramanand¹."

In India, the activities of these thinkers and reformers resulted in the spread of the Bhakti Movement, which, starting from the south, travelled towards north, and on to the Punjab, changing its character into Sikhism. A brief account of the origin, spread and character of the movement may here be given.

Bhakti
Movement
in South

The essentials of the Bhakti Movement are Monotheism, Meditation on Him, Service to Guru, no distinction of caste, immortality of soul and responsibility of man. The movement is said to have been started by Shankar Acharya in the south, as a reaction against the decay in the original pure philosophy of Buddha, and against the proselytizing influence of Islam. But this view is not supported by some writers, according to whom, Shankar Acharya did not originate the movement, he only revised the philosophy which had existed and had been believed in, in the much earlier period of the Indian History.

Its essen-
tials

Shankar
Acharya
not origi-
nator

Dr. Ishwari Prasad writes thus : "The Bhakti movement first made its appearance in the shape of religious reform, like Buddhism and Jainism, as a reaction against the ritualistic religion of the Vedas.....and it was based upon the teachings of Bhagwat Gita. Vasudeva Krishna, like Buddha and Mahavira in the Buddhist and Jain systems, was the originator of this reform²." The early name of this movement, however, says Bhandarkar, was *Ekantika Dharma* or religion of single-mindedness.

1. Macauliffe, i. p. ixl.

2. History of Medieval India, pp. 57-78.

Principles
existed
earlier

But although the Bhakti Movement might have been started in the Epic age, some of the fundamental principles of the Movement had existed much before the Bhagwat Gita itself was written.

Monotheism

Thus for instance, we may study the origin of the doctrine of Monotheism. According to Statius, the Latin poet, it was fear which made gods in the world. The primitive men prayed to different natural agencies to avert their furies. Besides some malignant ones, there were some benignant natural agencies as well—such as the Sun for its light and heat, which were worshipped. But ages before the Aryan migration to India and Europe, people realised that over and above all these agencies, there existed one Supreme Being.

Prajapati

Thus, Prajapati, who is represented as the Father of gods, and Lord of all living creatures existed during the Indus Valley age. When the Aryans came, they personified energies and attributes. Yet, according to Professor Wilson, the Aryans did not believe in the image or any visible types of the objects of worship. Reference to the creating Brahma, destroying Siva, the business-manager Vishnu and other minor powers in the Aryan literature, did not effect their belief in Monotheism. Max Muller, the great German scholar, terms the Rigvedic religion as "Henotheism," in which while worshipping different petty gods, the one Supreme God is not forgotten. One of the Rigvedic hymns makes it clear :

Aryan
Henotheism

"They call him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, and Agni. To what is one, the poets give many a name."

Other
principles

Thus clearly, the idea of Monotheism existed much before the Epic age. Similarly the idea of immortality of Soul also existed before the Bhagwat Gita was written. There is no reference to caste system in the Rigveda, rather one of its hymns reads : "I am a poet, my father is a doctor and my mother is a grinder of corn," which means no distinction was made between the followers of one profession and those of the others. The principle of 'the Responsibility of man', was, how-

ever, added by Vyasa, and in this, writes Cunningham, Vyasa had "perhaps surpassed Plato in keeping the people trembling alive to the punishment which awaited evil deeds¹." Similarly, the passionate Bhakti of the later age was the necessary outcome of the devotion in the Bhagwad Gita. The reverence to teacher is also an ancient Indian idea. *Grihya Sutra* and *Dharm Sastras* lay down rules governing relation of the *Guru* and *Brahmachari* (student).

It is clear thus that all the essentials of the Bhakti Movement were created in the early ages of the Indian history. Later on, however, there was a decline in the force of this philosophy. As the Brahmins developed their materialistic ambitions, the caste system hardened and the place of One God was taken over by millions of petty gods and goddesses. This state of things, however, could not continue for a long time. Soon there was a reaction, and further decline of the philosophy was stemmed by the rise of the reform movements, such as Buddhism and Jainism.

Decline

Stemmed

Buddhism, inspite of its silence about God, believed in the immortality of Soul, Karma and transmigration, which indirectly meant the acceptance of a power which controlled all that. Rest of the principles of the Bhakti philosophy were also kept in tact. The importance of Guru in the realisation of the Reality rather developed yet further during the Buddhist period.

The original and pure Buddhist philosophy, however, could not continue its hold in India for a long time. Soon there was a general decay in the religious beliefs of the people once again and it was arrested only when the Bhakti Movement was fully revived once again. The start towards its revival was made about the eighth century A.D., by the astute and powerful Brahmins, who expelled Buddhism from India by the 14th century. The movement, however, was not stopped after the expulsion of Buddhism. Another challenge had to be met, which came from Islam. The move-

Decay
againAgain
revived

1. History of the Sikhs.

ment was, therefore, continued. It started in the south¹ from where the final blow was given to Buddhism, and where the early Arabs had made their settlements. As the Muslim influence developed in the north, the movement shifted its emphasis from south to north and reached the Punjab where it established itself in the shape of Sikhism.

New
features
borrowed

Prapati

Absorption
and teacher

The differ-
ence

But as the movement developed as a reaction against Islam, it could not help borrowing some of the features of Islam itself, to make itself more popular among the people. The word *Islam* means surrender ; and submission to the will of God is an essential part of Muslim religious consciousness. Ramanuja, one of the propagators of the Bhakti Movement, adopted this principle. The word *Prapati* of the Bhakti Movement "is closely connected with adoration of the teacher (*acharyabhimana-yoga*) which consists in surrendering oneself completely to a teacher and being guided by him in everything."

"Absorption in God through devotion to a teacher is again an important Muslim conception. It was started by the *Shias* and from them taken by the *Sufis*. But it may be urged that the reverence to a teacher is an ancient Indian idea. Without going further back one may find it in the *Grihya Sutras* and the *Dharam Sastras*. They lay down rules governing the relation of Guru and *Brahmachari* (student). The student is asked to regard his Guru as more than his father.....The teacher is even compared to God. But this ancient homage that the disciple paid to the preceptor is not the same thing as devotion to a spiritual director who is human yet divine, who is a link in the hierachial chain of preceptors (*pir, sheikh, Imam*, prophet or *qutb*), each successor receiving inspiration from his predecessor and being the keeper of the traditions of the sect to which the novice once admitted belongs for ever²."

1. See Barth : Religions of India. Also, Fawett, 'Anthropology, Bulletin,' Vol. III, No. 1.
2. Dr. Tara Chand, 'Influence of Islam on Indian Culture,' pp. 114-15.

B—The Essential Principles of the Bhakti Movement

A reference has already been made to the essential principles of the Bhakti Movement, which may be mentioned here briefly once again. Among the Bhakti reformers, the names of Shankar Acharya, Ramanand, Kabir, Chaitanya and Guru Nanak are well known. All the Bhakti reformers, though they might have differed in details, agreed on the basic principles of the Movement.

The reformers

God who is Omnipresent, can be best attained through devotion to, and meditation on, Him. His name should be repeated, he should be praised and kept constantly in mind.

God

For the attainment of God, the help of a Guru, or a spiritual teacher is essential. As Dhanna Bhagat wrote :

Guru's help

"I did not know the way of recognizing Him who dwelleth in the heart ; I burned in the fire of worldly love and fell into death's noose.

"I collected so many fruits and sin and filled my heart with them, that I forgot God the Supreme Being.

"When the Guru caused the wealth of devine knowledge to enter me, I meditated on God, and accepted in my heart that He was One¹."

Soul of a man is immortal. It does not die with the death of his body. The man himself is responsible for the entanglements of his soul, which takes birth again and again and suffers from the worldly troubles. Thus according to Nam Dev :

Soul immortal

*The soul's entanglements depend on its acts ;
It is itself responsible for what it hath done².*

Human ego must be destroyed, and everything sacrificed at the feet of the Guru, before God can be attained. Kabir thus writes : "When I was proud, thou wert not in me ; now that thou art in me, I am not proud."

Destruction of ego

As a corollary, ritualism and the system of pilgrimages

Corollary

1. After Macauliffe, Vol. V., p. 110.

2. Ibid, p. 76.

etc. were condemned. If God was Omnipresent, he was within the body of a man as well, and there was no necessity of going from place to place in search of Him. As Guru Nanak wrote : "In the body is God, the body is the temple of God, in the body are pilgrims and travellers." Or, as Kabir wrote : Only they attain God who never "entertain love for pilgrimages, fasting, or for religious ceremonies, purifications, and austerities of supreme position."

God within

No idol
worship

No caste
and creed

Similarly, there was no need of worshipping the One in idols, who was present everywhere. And if God was the same for all and He made no distinction between the high and the lowly, there was no need of castes and the like. Kabir wrote : "The courageous man who effaceth caste and pride shall prove a saint."¹ Nor was there a need of giving any undue importance to a language, as it had been done in the case of Sanskrit. He was same for all, and everybody could worship Him in his own language.

C—Revival and The Reformers.

The Movement which was revived in the South, spread over the whole of India and became an all-India Movement. Shanker Acharya set the ball rolling in the South. Besides him, Ramanuj and Nam Deva spread the philosophy. Jai Dev and Chetanaya brought it into Bengal, and the Movement came into Uttar Pradesh through Ramanand and Kabir. Guru Nanak spread it in the Punjab. A brief sketch may here be given of the life and teachings of some of the more important Bhakti reformers.

The spread

Shankar Acharya—I

Born in
south, 788

Shankar Acharya, according to Dr. Wilson, was born in the Southern India. Views differ regarding the year in which he was born. The most accepted view, however, is that he took birth in 788 A.D.

The time

At the time Shankar Acharya was born, the original philosophy of Buddhism, which had so successfully challenged the popular beliefs and practices in the Brahmanic

1. Macauliffe, V, p. 140.

period of our Indian History, was on the decay. Some evils of ritualism, differences of castes, and social degeneration, as a reaction against which the Buddhist movement had been started, had crept into the Buddhist society itself. Gautma Buddha had become one of the gods to be worshipped rather than to be followed. The entire Buddhist society itself had gone back into Hinduism as one of the separate Hindu castes. And Buddha became one of the millions of gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon. Once again there was the need of a reformer who could show the right path to the staggering humanity. Shankar Acharya took up the challenge.

The Buddhist evils

Shankar Acharya was indeed a highly evolved soul, showing all the qualities of a born reformer. In his early youth he became a disciple of Govind Bhagwatpada, from whom he learnt the ancient Vedas. At a very young age he started his attack against the practices of the Buddhist *Viharas*. He toured through the different parts of the country and challenged the Buddhist authorities in discussions on the Reality. He died in 820, at the young age of only 32 years, but by that time, he had made his mark in the religious field. He left many converts to his philosophy in the south, who were later on more properly organised by Ramanuj.

Born reformer

Govind Bhagwat-pada

Attacked

Died 820

His Teachings

The philosophy of Shankar Acharya was the philosophy of 'Absolute Monism'. There was only one God, he declared, and he was Shiva, who was Omnipresent. There was no difference between God and the Universe, and between the *Atma* and *Pramatma*. Both were one. God was contained in the Universe, and the Universe was contained in Him. He laid stress on *Gian* or Knowledge of the Reality and declared that the things visible were no reality. They were only *Maya* or an Illusion. Reality must be searched beyond the unreal things.

Absolute Monism

Gian

Maya

By preaching about this philosophy, he tried to exterminate Buddhism from India. Yet, in order to be more

Borrowed from Buddhists	<p>effective, he had to borrow some of the principles of the vanquished itself. Thus, the old Brahmin worship was solitary, but Shankar Acharya copied the Buddhist public or congregational system, and established a monastery of Brahmins, on the lines of the Buddhist monasteries. Secondly, the old Brahmin ascetic used to separate himself from his fellows, but to copy the Buddhist hermit, who became member of the community of devotees, Shankar Acharya created an order of the Brahmin monks. Thirdly, the old Brahmin reared family, while the Buddhist lived a celibate life. To copy this Shankar Acharya also preached the renunciation of secular life. The most important development, however, introduced into Brahmanism by Shankar Acharya was the establishment of Ascetic Orders and Brahmanic <i>Math</i>. This gave importance to the leader of the order, for whose respect particular rules were to be observed, and thus he was converted later on into the Guru of the Bhakti Movement.</p>
Congregational	
Order of monks	
Renunciation	
Math	
Guru	<p>To start with, Shankar Acharya's philosophy created a revolution in Deccan. But after his death, it soon became stagnant, and for its further development, further changes had to be introduced into it, according to the circumstances.</p>
Stagnant	
Reasons	
Maya	
Not abstract	
Pantheism is cold	<p>"Pantheism", thus writes Mecaulliffe, "is too cold and too abstract to satisfy the reasonable aspirations of the human soul." Rama and Krishna, with their feelings and congenial acts, writes Elphinstone, attracted more votaries than the gloomy Shiva of Shankar Acharya. In fact, writes Cunningham, people can understand a black stone</p>
A gloomy God	

more, when they are told that it represents typically the reproductive energy of Shiva, through which the Universe was created. The abstract philosophy that Universe is created from out of God, is incomprehensible to them.

Black stone
better

It was due to these reasons that Shankar Acharya's philosophy was later on attacked by his own disciple, Ramanuj, who introduced the required change in it, to make it more popular among the people.

Ramanuj
attacked it.

Ramanuj—II

Ramanuj was born in 1017 A. D., and according to the tradition, says Aiyengar¹, he lived for 120 years, dying in 1137. He was educated in the Vedas at Kanchi or Conjeevaram. Subsequently he came under the guidance of Yadava Prakasa, head of the philosophical academy at Kanchi, and under him his ideas matured.

Born 1017

Educated

After completing his education, he took charge of a temple at Yamanchari. He developed his influence. But his position and influence aroused jealousy in some minds, who also made an abortive attempt at murdering him. In his later years, persecuted by Kulottunga, the Chola king, for his religious views, Ramanuj migrated to the Hoysala Yadava dominions, where he converted Vitala Deva, the ruler² of the state, to his faith.

At Yaman-
chhari

To Hoy-
sala

The ruling Prince, in honour of Ramanuj changed his name from Vitala Deva to Vishnu Vardhan.

During his life-time, Ramanuj wrote several works, "the principal of which are the *Sri Ramanuj Bhashya*, the *Gita Bhashya*, the *Vedaratha Sangraha*, the *Vedanta dipa*, the *Vedanta Sar*, and the *Dharm Sanhita*." "He is said to have had ten thousand followers, seventy-four of whom were specially devoted to their teacher. These seventy-four, however, each put a different interpretation on his doctrines, and accordingly established as many sects of their own.

His works

His follow-
ers

1. Ancient India, pp. 195—221.

2. According to Ishwari Prasad, it was not the ruler of the state, but his brother, who was thus converted.

Died in
1137

Ramanuj died at Sriranganath at the age of one hundred and twenty years," in the year A. D. 1137.¹

His Teachings

Vishnu
supreme

Ramanuj attacked doctrines of Maya preached by Shankar Acharya. He believed in Vishnu as the supreme Being. Vishnu existed before the creation of the Universe, and created everything that exists. "Creation originated in his desire to multiply himself and was formed from his material essence. This essence, however manifested, is pervaded by a portion of his vitality which again is distinct from his spiritual essence." That is, the individual souls are not one with the supreme Being, though they emanate from it as sparks from fire.

Soul and
God

Not attri-
buteless

Again, Vishnu and the Universe are one, yet Vishnu is not attributeless. He has forms, can be worshipped in idols and in temples, and can be adored by the presentation of perfumes and flowers etc. He is also pleased when one repeats the name of his consort Lakshmi.

How to
obtain ?

The way to obtain Him is Bhakti, i.e. repetition of his name and adoration of his idols etc. And further, in this connection Krishna may be quoted : "To those who are ever devoted and worship me with love, I give that knowledge by which they attain me." One should develop in oneself the quality of desirelessness and the renunciation of the fruits of his action.

A step for-
ward

The philosophy of Ramanuj, obviously, was a step forward towards meeting the understanding of a common man. The original philosophy of pantheism was retained, yet the supreme Being was not to be formless and attributeless. God was contained in everything, yet He could be adored in special idol forms.

Ramananda — III

A bridge

"Ramananda, thus writes Dr. Tara Chand, was the bridge between the *Bhakti* movement of the south and the north". Not much is known regarding his life and career.

1. Macauliffe Vol. VI, pp. 98—100.

2. Dr. Tara Chand, p. 143.

Nabhaji writes in his *Bhagat Mal* that Ramanand was the fourth in spiritual descent from Ramanuj. According to Grierson and Bhandarkar¹, he was born in 1299 A. D., but Macauliffe's² view that he was born in 1398 A. D. seems to be more reliable. His main career lay in the first half of the 15th century, but his exact date of death is not available.

His birth

Born at Allahabad in the family of Kanyakubja Brahmin, Ramananda was educated partly at the place of his birth and partly at Benaras. Early in his career, he came under the influence of a vedantist, but later he changed and became a disciple of Raghavananda, who belonged to the sect of Ramanuja. Subsequently, however, he developed independent ideas and founded a sect of his own.

Education

Founded a sect

His Teachings

Ramanand's theological concept did not differ from that of Ramanuj except in a few things. He substituted Sita and Rama in place of Lakshmi and Narayan as special objects of worship. And contrary "to the practice of Ramanuj..... Ramanand threw his spiritual door wide open, admitted disciples of all castes, and boldly announced that *gyan*, or knowledge of God, emancipated man, from all social bondage³." His abolition of the caste restrictions is more important, as he wrote :

Sita and Ram

No caste distinctions

ਜਾਤਪਾਤ ਪੂਛੇ ਨਹਿ ਕੋਇ ।

ਹਰ ਕੋ ਭਜੇ, ਸੋ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਹੋਇ ॥

The supreme Being could be attained through Bhakti, but the importance of a spiritual teacher for guidance on the path was specially emphasised, as is obvious when he says that he was going to search for Him outside, but the *Guru* told Him to be living within one's own self :

How obtained

Guru

ਪੂਜਨ ਚਾਲੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਠਾਇ ।

ਸੋ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਬਤਾਇਓ ਗੁਰ ਮਨ ਹੀ ਮਾਹਿ ॥

1. See his 'Vaisvanism and Saivism.'

2. Macauliffe, Vol. VI, p. 101.

3. Macauliffe, Vol. VI, p. 103.

His disci-
ples

Ramanand's twelve famous disciples were Kabir, Pipa, Sukha, Anantananda, Bhavananda, Sursura, Padmavati, Narhari, Raidasa, Dhanna, Saina and the wife of Sursura. His

Two schools

teachings resulted in the rise of two schools of religious thought. The first was conservative and remained faithful to the ancient Hindu beliefs ; while the second was radical and tried to create a religion acceptable both to the Hindus and the Muslims. To the first school belonged Tulsidasa who, according to Dr. Tara Chand, "is like a natural perennial mountain-spring which bubbles with the waters of pure sweet joy and slakes the thirst of those who are weary and heavy laden with the sorrow of the world¹." To the second school belonged Kabir, regarding whom we will have much to say.

Kabir—IV

Adopted

A Brahmin widow, to hide her shame left her new-born child on a lake called Lahar Talao, a short distance from Benaras. The child was picked up by a Muslim weaver Niru, and his wife Nima, having no son of her own, adopted him. In due time, a Qazi was called in, who opened the Quran and cast the lot. The word Kabir was found to be the first in the passage, and the child was named Kabir, which in the Arabic language means great.

Birth and
death

It is difficult to ascertain the year in which the event of Kabir's birth occurred, as different writers have given different dates of Kabir's birth. According to Farquhar, Burns and Westcott², Kabir was born in 1440, while according to the editor of *Santa Bani Sangraha*³, Bhandarkar and Macauliffe⁴, he was born in 1398. Dr. Tara Chand forwards some more valid arguments that he was born in 1425 and died either in 1492 or in 1518 ; dying in the first case at the age of sixty-seven and in the latter case at ninety-three.

1. Dr. Tara Chand., p. 145.

2. Kabir and Kabir Panth.

3. S.B.S., Vol. I, p. 1.

4. The Sikh Religion, Vol. VI, p. 122.

Be that as it may, Kabir was brought up by Muslim parents, and learnt the profession of his father at a young age. Later on, however, he came under the influence of Ramananda, as Kabir himself wrote : "I was revealed in *Kasi* and was awakened by Ramananda¹." But here he remained only for a short time. A considerable period of Kabir's life was spent in the company of Muslim Sufis, where he matured his ideas. Sufi influence upon Kabir is clear from Ahmad Shah's translation of Kabir's *Bijak* which shows that Kabir used over two hundred Arabic and Persian words in this work after the Sufi methods. Further, according to Dr. Tara Chand, Kabir's words such as : "When you came into the world the people laughed but you wept, do not conduct yourself in a manner that after your (death) people should laugh at you", is a paraphrase of the well-known lines of Sa'di².

Influences
on him

Yet, however, neither the influence of Hindu religious thought, nor that of the Muslim could make him a partisan of either. He developed his independent ideas, condemning the wrong practices of the both : "Hindus call upon *Rama*, the Musalmans on *Rahiman*, yet both fight and kill each other, and none knows the truth." The natural consequence of all this was that when after his apprenticeship, Kabir settled down at Benaras as a teacher, both the Hindus as well as Muslims, out of their jealousy and short-sightedness, tried to harm him using all the means which priestcraft and the vested interest of the age used.

Independent
ideas

Jealousy

Several stories are told regarding the persecutions to which Kabir was subjected inclusive of the poisoning of the ears of Sikandar Lodhi against him, into the details of which we do not propose to enter here.

His perse-
cutions

His Teachings

Although Kabir never received any high worldly education, and "he did not touch ink or paper and never held a pen³," yet he left behind him a vast mass of poetry, which

Not educa-
ted

1. *Bijak*, Ramaini, p. 77.

2. See Dr. Tara Chand, pp. 148—153.

3. Vishwanath Singh, *Bijak Kabir Das Satik*, Sakhi, p. 187.

A vast
mass

was very rich in the variety of metres he used, and which was communicated by him orally; thereby creating the possibility of adulteration of the purity of its form.

Central
theme

Almighty

A great poet and mystic, the central theme of Kabir was the Almighty, the Omnipresent and Omnipotent, who could variously be addressed as *Allah, Kuda, Hari, Brahma, Govinda, Samrath, Sain* and *Sahib* etc. Kabir's God is transcendent and immanent. He is contained in everything, yet His nature cannot be explained, as he writes :

"Oh, how may I ever express that secret word ?

Oh, how can I say He is not like this, and he is like that ?

There are no words to tell that which He is¹."

How
obtained ?

Kabir's God cannot be obtained even by offering one's weight in gold. God can be obtained only through devotion and self-surrender, as he says :

"O man, embrace the service of God,

Whether He be angry with thee or love thee²."

Disqualifi-
cations

Kabir condemns ritualistic practices of the Hindus, in his characteristic humour. God, he says, cannot be obtained by going about naked, or by dwelling in the forest. For if it were possible, the deer of the forest would be saved. God cannot be obtained by shaving head, for the sheep do not obtain salvation thereby. Nor can God be obtained by bathing in the evening and the morning, and in the Ganges, for if it were possible, the frogs living constantly in water, should have obtained Him. God cannot be obtained by idol-worship, by superstitions, by penance and fasting. God can be obtained only by realising Him within one's heart. He says :

"What availeth devotion, what penance, what fasting
and worship

To him in whose heart there is worldly love ?

O man, apply the heart to God ;

Thou shalt not obtain Him by artifice."

1. See Rabindra Nath Tagore : Kabir's Poems, IX.

2. Macauliffe, Vol. VI, p. 178.

He condemns the Hindus and the Muslims alike for their ignorance, and says, "The Hindus call him Rama, the Muslims Rahiman, yet both fight and kill each other, and none knows the reality."

Both con-
demned

In Kabir's philosophy, *Guru* occupies a supreme position, as in the case of the *Sufi* order. God cannot be obtained without a spiritual guide, or a *Guru*, and the *Guru*'s position, therefore is so much exalted that :

Guru's
position

"If Hari becomes angry still there is some chance, but if the *Guru* is angry then there is no chance whatever."

Although at certain places Kabir's words might be construed to mean retirement from the world, yet his actual philosophy was the philosophy of a householder. He condemned going to the forests and mountains for the purpose of obtaining God. He himself stayed at home and preached living pure amidst impurities. He recommends staying at home and waging a constant war to overcome the senses as :

House
holder

"Lay hold on your sword, and join in the fight,

Fight, O my brother, as long as life lasts.....

In the field of this body a great war goes

Forward against passion, anger, pride and greed.

It is in the kingdom of truth, contentment, and purity that this battle is raging, and the sword that rings forth most loudly is the sword of His name²."

The character of Kabir's poetry is superb. He seems to have experienced the flight inward beyond the mental world, and direct into the mystic union itself. The journey is long, and there are worlds to cross before one reaches the goal, but when one has reached the goal, he has attained the highest bliss and has gone beyond the approach of pains and sorrows. Thus he says : "Abandoning the action pertaining to humanity (*nasut*), one sees the sphere of the angels (*malakut*) ; then leaving even the sphere of majesty (*jabarut*) one gets the vision of divinity (*lahut*) ; but when these four are left behind then comes *hahut*, where there is

Character
of poetry

The flight

The goal

1. Yugalanand, *Guru Ka Anga*, p. 6.

2. Rabindar Nath Tagore : *Kabir's Poems*, XXXVII

no death or separation and where *Yama* finds no entrance¹." Describing the exalted goal of Kabir, writes Rabindranath Tagore :

"There falls the rhythmic beat of life and death ;
Rupture wells forth, and all space is radiant with light,
There the unstruck music is sounded ; it is the
music of the love of three worlds.
There millions of lamps of sun and moon are burning,
There are drum beats, and the lover swings in play,
There love-songs resound, and light rains in showers ;
And the worshipper is entranced in the taste of the
heavenly nectar.
Look upon life and death ; there is no separation
between them.
The right hand and the left hand are one and the same
Kabir says, there the wise man is speechless ; for
This truth may never be found in Vedas or in books² "

No distinction

Kabir sees no difference between man and man. For him there is no high and lowly and no good and bad. All originated from the same primordial substance.

‘ਅਵਲਿ ਅਲਹ ਨੂਰੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਦੇ ਸਭ ਬੰਦੇ ।
ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਕਉਨ ਭਲੇ ਕੋ ਮੰਦੇ ।

His beliefs

He preaches love for all. He condemns the distinctions of caste and creed, condemns cheap beliefs and prejudices and preaches a simple life. There is no need of going on pilgrimages. He seems to be supporting widow-remarriage and condemns the *Sati* system. His condemnation of the practices followed by the priesthood is more violent, and the religious leaders both of the Hindus as well as the Muslims are considered by him to be cheats and men of low character.

Transmigration and evolution

And those who do not adopt honest means, who indulge into the gratification of the worldly desires, do not repeat the name of God and do not try to understand the mystic reality,

1. Kabir : *Rekhta*, No. 22 ; *Siddhanta Dipika*, p. 15. Quoted by Dr. Tara Chand, pp. 161—62.

2. Kabir's Poems, XVII.

are all threatened by Kabir of births and re-births, and unlimited amount of pain attached to them. He believes in the theosophical concept of the evolution of the human soul, in the theory of transmigration, and in the ultimate aim of freeing one's soul from adopting bodies and taking births. He gives his own experience :

"I was in immobile and mobile creatures, in worms and in moths ;

I passed through many births of various kinds.

In this way I occupied many bodies,

But when, O God, I assumed *human* birth,

I was a Jogi, a Jati, a penitent, a brahmachari,

Sometimes a king, an emperor, and sometimes a beggar.

The apostates shall die, but the saints shall all live,

And drink the elixir of God with their tongues.

Saith Kabir, O God, have mercy on us ;

We have grown weary ; make us now whole¹ !"

Chaitanya — V

The most important reformer in Bengal was Chaitanya, who is supposed to be the father of the Bengal Vaishnavism. D. C. Sen describes the religious life in Bengal before Chaitanya's birth in the following words : "The power of the Brahmans had become oppressive. The rules of caste became more and more stringent as *Kulinism* was stereotyped..... The lower strata of society groaned under the autocracy of the higher, who shut the portals of learning against the inferior classes". The ideals of Islam had produced an effect upon the society which made confusion worse confounded.

Father of
Bengal
Vaishna-
vism

Under these circumstances was Chaitanya born of Brahmin parents at Nadia in 1485. He lost his father, while still young, married at eighteen, but lost interest in the world and renounced it at twenty-five. For six years he wandered over the whole of the country, after which he returned to Puri, where he spent the rest of his sixteen years. After his return from the tour, writes J. N. Sirkar, he developed his religious ecstasy to such an extent that he "for sometime behaved like

Born 1485
Life

1. Macauliffe, Vol. VI, p. 149.

a mad man : he laughed, wept, incessantly shouted Krishna's name, climbed up trees, or raved in abstraction imagining himself to be Krishna."

Krishna,
highest
God

Highest God in Chaitanya's teachings is Sri Krishna. He says : "Direct all your efforts to Krishna, witness his mercies, celebrate His Nativity and other days in the company of bhaktas."

How ob-
tained ?

Krishna can be obtained through Bhakti, and according to J. N. Sirkar, Chaitanya says : "There are sixty-four modes of cultivating *Bhakti*. The five chief of them are (1) the society of holy men, (2) *Kirtan* of Krishna's name, (3) listening to the reading of the *Bhagwat*, (4) dwelling at Mathura, and (5) reverential service of His image. Even a little of these five creates love for Krishna."

No caste
system

Chaitanya condemned the existence of caste distinctions in the Hindu society and preached brotherhood of man. He also condemned the Hindu rites and ritualism and preached only a simple and honest life.

Degrada-
tion

In the beginning, the teachings of Chaitanya had a good moral effect upon the Hindu Society. But his approach to Krishna being emotional, it brought, in some cases, moral degradation where people indulged into emotion in the name of Radha and Krishna.

Namdev - VI

Most impor-
tant of
Maharash-
tra

In Maharashtra, Jnanesvar, Sena Narhari, Nam Dev, Ek Nath and Tuka Ram were the famous reformers. Jnanesvar started the Movement, and completed a Marathi commentary on Bhagwad Gita in 1290. The most important reformer of Maharashtra, however, was Namdev, who according to tradition, was born at Narsi Thamani in 1270, and was a disciple of Khechar.

One God

Namdev worshipped one God, *Vitthal*, "Who is contained in everything and fills all creation."

"There is one God of various *manifestations* contained in and filling everything ; withersoever I look there is He.

Maya's variegated picture hath so bewitched the world
that few know God.

Everything is God, everything is God, There is nothing
but God.

.....

My guru instilled into me right ideas, and when I awoke
to reason my mind accepted them.

Saith Namdev, behold the creation of God, and reflect
on it in thy mind.¹

Namdev exposed the inefficiency of the external forms of religion thus : "Vows, fasts, and austerities are not all necessary, nor is it necessary for you to go on a pilgrimage. Be you watchful in your hearts and always sing the name of *Hari*. It is not necessary to give up eating food or drinking water ; fix your mind on the feet of *Hari*. *Yoga* or sacrificial ceremonies or giving up objects of desire is not wanted. Realise a fondness for the feet of *Hari*."²

External
forms.

Namdev condemned idol worship and stood for the elevation of the status of women. He condemned caste exclusiveness, and stood for religious toleration and the development of the vernacular literature³.

Other
beliefs.

1. Macauliffe; p. 41.

2. Bhandarkar : Vaisnavism and Saivism, p. 96.

3. See Ranade, Rise of the Maratha Power, pp. 50-51.

CHAPTER III

GURU NANAK

Father of the Bhakti Movement in the Punjab was Guru Nanak, true historic account of whose life, as according to William Archer, the author of 'The Sikhs' is a desideratum still: "It is almost a universal experience," writes Indu Bhushan Bannerji, "that the life stories of religious teachers gradually become so inextricably mixed up with legends and myths that the real facts become obscured almost beyond recovery." And this is true of Guru Nanak as much as of any other religious leader.

A—The Sources.

Several manuscripts are available regarding the life story of Guru Nanak. An attempt was made by Professor Gurmukh Singh of the Oriental College, Lahore, at the classification of the Gurmukhi manuscripts regarding the subject. According to his classification ten biographies of Guru Nanak were thus known. They may here be mentioned with facts regarding them available elsewhere.

The oldest of the records regarding the life of Guru Nanak is *Janam Sakhi* or Biography of Sewa Dass, which according to Macauliffe, was compiled in 1588. The biography, which fell into the hands of Colebrooke, and which was handed over by him to the India Office in London, appears to be a copy of the biography of Sewa Das itself.

The second is the scrappy account given in the first 'Var' of Bhai Gurdas. Adi Granth was dictated by Guru Arjan to Bhai Gurdas, which was completed in 1604, and in which the Guru is said to have offered to insert some of the Bhai's hymns. The Bhai, too humble, however, refused saying that they were not of a standard good enough. This shows

Inextricably mixed

Gurmukh Singh's classification

Janamsakhi of Sewa Das

'Var' of Bhai Gurdas

that the Bhai should have written a portion at least of his 'Var' before 1604, though much of it, as we know, was written later, in the time of Guru Hargobind.

These are the two most important documents regarding the life of Guru Nanak. But neither of them is contemporary, the one having been written about 50 years after Guru's death, while the second about 100 year's after. At the time of the writing of the account of Sewa Das, some of Guru Nanak's contemporaries were still living, yet neither Sewa Das, nor Bhai Gurdas, according to Macauliffe, tried to give full account of his life. And again, although Bhai Budha, one of the most revered disciples of Guru Nanak, was still living, myth by this time seems to have already progressed enough. Not few of the incidents related by Bhai Gurdas contain it. For instance, the account is given as to how to the astonishment of Pir Dastgir of Baghdad, the Guru caught the hand of the Pir's son and caused him to travel through thousands of nether worlds, in the twinkling of an eye. And the same is true of the account given by Sewa Das.

None
contempo-
rary

Not all
correct

The Third is the 'Gyan Ratnavali' written by Bhai Mani Singh. But this is primarily an expansion of the first 'Var' of Bhai Gurdas itself. The fourth is the biography attributed to Paira of Mokha caste or to Bhai Bala.

'Gyan
Ratnavali'

Bhai Bala Sandhu was a direct disciple of Guru Nanak, and he is said to have once visited Guru Angad, the successor of Guru Nanak. Guru Angad pleased, requested Bhai Bala to narrate some incidents of Guru Nanak's childhood, as they were said to have played together in their childhood. Bhai Bala did that and thus the biography was prepared. Macauliffe, however, disbelieves that this biography should have been compiled in the time of Guru Angad. He forwards the argument that all the popular biographies are written in current Punjabi dialect, whereas that of Bala, if ever written so early, should have been in archaic language. Moreover, had Bhai Bala been that important, Guru Angad should have known him earlier, whereas we learn that he made his acquaintance with him only at his above-mentioned visit. Remark-

Bhai Bala's
Janam-
sakhi

When co-
mpiled ?

ably also, Bhai Bala's name is not mentioned in the lists of important persons drawn by Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Mani Singh. This biography, conclude some writers, is neither very old, nor original. It is based upon Nanak Prakash of Santokh Singh.¹

Nanak
Prakash of
Santokh
Singh

The fourth is the Nanak Prakash of Bhai Santokh Singh, which was written in 1823, or about three centuries after Guru Nanak's death. But this account too is not very reliable. Taking care to prove that Guru Nanak did visit Ceylon, Santokh Singh writes that the Guru met Hanuman and Bibhikhan, and also had a discourse with Prahlad and Dhurba ; as if all of them were the contemporaries of the Guru.

Fifth to
tenth

The fifth biography is the one prepared for the followers of Baba Hindal ; the sixth is Nanak Chandrodyā (Sanskrit) by Pandit Ganda Ram ; the seventh is the one published by Diwan Buta Singh ; the eighth is the biography attributed to Bhai Mani Singh ; the ninth, the biography by Anand Ghan, a Sadhu of the Udasi sect ; and the tenth is the biography written at Lahore, completed in 1733.

Biography
written by
Bhai Vir
Singh

Besides, there is the important Punjabi biography of Vir Singh. Dr. Mohan Singh in an article published in the Spokesman of 9th December, 1957 writes thus: "During the last 30 years, six very valuable Gurmukhi manuscript biographies of Guru Nanak fell into my hands. Two slipped out for ever ; one was presented to me by Bawa Budh Singh, who said he had received it from the Poonch State ; it was left at Lahore with my other belongings ; the other most precious indeed for its numerous paintings of Guru Nanak Dev and his contemporaries, was the personal property of the late Khan Sher Mohd. Khan of Mardan. He had it in the family as

Six valua-
ble manus-
cripts

1. See Karam Singh Historian,

‘ਕਤਕ ਕਿ ਵਿਸਾਖ ?’

In this book he proves that there existed no person as Bala, who should have accompanied Guru Nanak in his travels. This biography was written by some body long after Guru Angad's death.

an heirloom, received from the head of a Sikh shrine in N. W. F. P.

"Of the remaining four", continues he, "one dated 1701 was caligraphed by a Brahmin and is in the Punjab University Library, Lahore. This is a collection of 'Adi Sakhis': the second is dated 1651 A. D. and is known as Mehrban's version, being really a collection of three groups of episodes, Pothi Sach Khand, Pothi Hari Ji and Baba Ji Ki Bani with *Ghoshts* and *Arths*. This is in the Khalsa College Library, Amritsar. The third is a collection of *Goshts*; and the fourth is an undated copy which I recently purchased for the Punjab University Library. The manuscript is beautifully written and, so far as its literary beauty and significance, this is the finest example of the Paira 'Mokha Sakhi class'".

Remaining
Four

There are also two English biographies prepared by Raja Sir Daljit Singh and Mr. S. R. S. Thapur. Both of them were written in the present century, and are based on traditional Gurmukhi accounts. But here too the facts are not separated from fiction.

Two
English

Dr. Mohan Singh has classified these biographies into four categories :—" 1. The Var class, exemplified by Gurdas and in the 'Var' Paikamabani, etc. These are in verse, the three following being in prose. 2. The Janam Patri class, consisting of those episodes in which the various ages of the Guru are mentioned at the very outset. 3. The Sakhi class. 4. The Ghosht class. All the three kinds of prose biographies have mostly an inset utterance of the Guru.¹"

Four
categories

Exaggeration of importance and glorification of the hero is a part of almost all the medieval biographies. The later biographers such as Bhai Santokh Singh have yet another motive, which is to sanctify the places, persons and the families etc. related to their hero. The biographies in the shape of *Ghoshts*, or dialogues between the Guru and his contemporaries, reveal, according to Dr. Mohan Singh, the Sikh scholarship and dialectic ability at

The
motives

1. Spokesman, 9th Dec., 1957.

their best. It may, however, be pointed out that "for lack of available historical information the 'Ghost-writers' have badly tripped and sadly bungled, of course with the best of intentions."

Contem-
poraries ?

"Nanak's biographers were duly impressed by the greatness of four of his Indian predecessors—Gorakhnath, Farid Shakar Ganj, Nam Dev and Kabir, and they have made attempts to bring first, second and fourth into living contact with Nanak. They, however, forgot that Guru Nanak never refers to Farid Shakar Ganj, Nam Dev or Kabir; he does refer to Machhander, Gorakh, Bharthari, Charpat, Gopichand, Luharipa, but that reference is manifestly a reference to them as founders of various Jogi sects, and the implication is patently there that all of them had long passed out of their bodies, though as "*Siddhas*" they were generally believed to be existing on this earth, in this country, in the Meru region. Lastly, there are a number of Nanak's audiences with God which reflect both the Upanishadic and the Quranic tradition. The biographies are thus extremely intriguing literature¹".

Audiences
with God.

Dabistan

Besides these biographies, we also find some account on the subject in the 'Dabistan' of Mohsin Fani, who was a contemporary of the fifth, the sixth and the seventh Gurus. He was a personal friend of the sixth Guru, and his account is more balanced. But he too sometimes believes in the myth, and thus colours his account with it.

Adi
Granth

The hymns of Guru Nanak in the Adi Granth are the most authentic and the most reliable account of his activities. But here too a connected chronological account of his life cannot be prepared for obvious reasons.

B—The Early Life

A short account, as extracted from different biographies and other sources, may here be given of the life of Guru Nanak. Historians have differed regarding the date of Guru Nanak's birth. But the most acceptable date seems to be the 3rd of *Baisakh*, *Sambat* 1526, corresponding to

1. Spokesman, 9th Dec., 1957.

the middle of April 1469.¹ He was born at Talwandi², about 35 miles south-west of Lahore. His father's name was Kalu and his mother was Tripta.

Born April
1469

According to popular Sikh legends, the birth took place at about 1 O'clock at night, when the moon was at its zenith. There were heavenly music, and some other supernatural signs. Thirty-three crore gods paid their homage and the nurse was struck with the beaming face of the Baby, which was surrounded by a resplendent halo. As students of History, however, we may not attach much credence to such traditions. The Baby was named Nanak by the family *prohit*, Pandit Hardy, who also made a prophecy that his name would resound both in earth and heaven, and that he would be worshipped alike by the Hindus and Musalmans.

The
occasion

The pro-
phesy

"During his infancy," writes Sewaram Singh, "he used to melt on seeing misery, and when he was able to walk, the author of Nanak Prakash records instances of his carrying away from home articles of diet and clothing and bestow them on the needy. Instead of taking part in childish, He invented new games involving a realisation of the Presence of God, and instructed his companions to practise in them. His parents often got alarmed at his thus getting engaged in the Games of Silence, and called in the village physician, but nothing abnormal was found in his constitution. These playgrounds are the site of a shrine, called the *Bal Leela* (the Child's frolics), even as His birth place is the site of a big and beautiful shrine, visited annually by millions of Sikhs³."

The
infancy
games

1. For arguments see Karam Singh Historian, '*Katik hi Baisakh*?' pp. 254—270; the other date forwarded by many writers is the month of *Kartik*, *Sambat* 1526, which corresponds to November, 1469.
2. Here again the scholars differ. According to some, his father Kalu lived at Talwandi; but Guru Nanak was born at Kane Kachhe, 15 miles south of Lahore, while some others assert that he was born at Dera Sahib, in Amritsar district, in his mother's father's house.
3. The Divine Master, 'pp. 20—21

Education

An important incident occurred in the life of Guru Nanak, when he was seven. In the prevailing Hindu manner, the village astrologer told Kalu that the proper time for the commencement of his son's education had arrived. The boy Nanak was sent to a village school. The *Pandha* as the school teacher was called, tried to teach him the alphabet, but Nanak asked him if the *Pandha* knew the significance of the letters he was going to teach him. And to the astonishment of his teacher, he composed an acrostic on each of the letters of the alphabet there and then. After some days, as the *Janamsakhis* continue, Nanak challenged his teacher if the education he was imparting was useful at all. And on the occasion, he composed the following hymns :

Teacher challenged

"Burn wordly love, grind its ashes and make it into ink ; turn superior intellect into paper.

Make divine love thy pen, and thy heart the writer ; ask thy Guru and write his instructions.

Write God's name, write His praises, write that He hath neither end nor limit.

O master, learn to write this account,

*So that, whenever it is called for, a true mark may be found thereon....."*¹

A similar story is told when he was sent to a Persian teacher, and where he composed another acrostic on Persian alphabet.

The object

The object of such stories is clear, which was to attribute acquirements of the Guru's education to divine inspiration rather than to ordinary mortals. These acrostics are not found in the *Adi Granth*, and some scholars deny that they were written by Guru Nanak at all. Moreover, it is difficult to believe, as the *Janamsakhis* would like us to, that Nanak being withdrawn from the schools shortly after these incidents, did not learn any language from any body and yet could write such inspiring poetry breathing of the ancient Hindu lore. The *Janamsakhis* are unanimous that Nanak "courted the retirement of the forest and the society of the

religious men who frequented it." Moreover, he travelled far and wide, during the course of which he must have come in contact with some of the best religious reformers of his time. And thus, he developed his knowledge and perfected his education.

Where
educated ?

At the age of nine, another incidence occurred in the life of Guru Nanak, when his father invited the members and relations of his family together, and asked the family priest, Hardyal, to perform the ceremony of investing the boy with *janeu*, or the sacred thread, without which a Hindu was considered to be an outcaste. Guru Nanak considered this a futile practice and composed the following hymns on the occasion.

Investiture
of janeu

Make mercy thy cotton, contentment thy thread, continence its knot, truth its twist.

That would make a *janeu* for the soul ; if thou have it, O Brahman, then put it on me.

It will not break, or become soiled, or be burned, or lost.

Blest is the man, O Nanak, who goeth with such a thread on his neck¹.

Here again, scholars suppose these hymns to have been written later on when the Guru was of more matured mind. But the *Janamsakhis* have manufactured an event to superimpose the hymns into.

Super-
imposed ?

Nanak was married, according to *janamsakhis* at the age of fourteen to Sulakhni, the daughter of Mula, a resident of Batala in the present district Gurdaspur. He had two sons—Srichand, who later founded the order of *Udasis*, and Lakhmi Das. He probably had one daughter as well.

Married at
14

All this, however, could not change Nanak from his other-worldly character. He was a moody mediative boy, "more given to reverie and day-dreams than energetic practical pursuits. He was unmindful of his personal needs and

1. Macualiffe, Vol. 1, p. 16.

Rai Bular
saw it

careless of his appointed tasks."¹ Rai Bular, a nobleman of Talwandi, the direct descendant of Rai Bhoie, the founder of the village, who was a Bhatti Rajput and Muslim in faith and was virtually the ruler of the *Tappa* or district; understood the character of the boy better than his father Kalu could. The *Janamsakhis* relate several stories regarding it. While one day herding his buffaloes, Nanak fell asleep under a tree in the midday heat. Rai Bular, who happened to pass by was astonished to observe that the shadow of the tree remained stationary to protect Nanak, while the shadows of the other trees had veered round with the progress of the sun. On another occasion, Rai Bular observed that while the boy had similarly fallen asleep, a large cobra shadowed him with its hood from the scorching rays of the sun.

Tried but
failed

All this developed a respect for the boy in the mind of Rai Bular. But despite this nobleman's recommendations, Kalu completely failed in understanding his son. The father tried the son in several professions. Nanak was tried as a herdsman and as a trader, but he failed. Nanak was asked by his father to join him in agriculture. But the boy replied :

"Make thy body the field, good works the seed, irrigate with God's name ;

*Make thy heart the cultivator ; God will germinate in the heart, and thou shalt thus obtain the dignity of nirvan."*²

Service at
Sultanpur

The father was completely disgusted. But incidently, just this time, he received a proposal from Jai Ram, his son-in-law, who was an officer under Daulat Khan at Sultanpore, that Nanak should be sent thither, where he would secure him a service under Daulat Khan. The proposal was readily accepted, and Nanak left for Sultanpore at the age of eighteen.

A store-
keeper

At Sultanpore, Nanak was appointed as a store-keeper. Nanak, according to some writers, remained in this service for a period of more than ten years, and here he gave a very good

1. Dr. Tara Chand, p. 167.

2. Sri Rag. See Macauliffe, Vol. I, p. 21.

account of himself. According to *Janamsakhis*, here he lived a very regular life. He used to get up early in the morning, bathed in the Bein, a rivulet near by, and sat down for prayer. After the prayer, he ate something and busied himself with his account books. He used only a small portion of his salary upon himself and upon his family, giving away the rest to poor. At *modikhana*, or the store where he worked, he was often found engaged in spiritual discussions with the *Sadhus* who approached him.

Regular
life

Here one day, an incident occurred, as according to the *Janamsakhis*. Nanak went early one morning to take bath in the Bein. He plunged into it leaving his clothes with a servant and disappeared. Vigorous search was made, but his body could not be recovered. Rumours were set afloat and people gossiped wildly that Nanak had gone bankrupt, had spoiled the Nawab's stock and disappeared from fear of him. When the news reached the Nawab he got the accounts checked and to his surprise discovered that he owed Nanak a considerable amount and that there was a large surplus stock.

Disappear-
ed

In the meantime according to his biographies, Nanak disappearing at Bein, journeyed to the court of the Almighty Father, who gave him a "goblet, full of the Elixir of God's Name, which the Master drank, and the voice of the Lord commanded him thus :

At Almigh-
ty's court

"Thou art welcome, O Nanak, that hath absorbed thyself in the Name. Do go hence now and do the work for which thou wast born.

People of the *Kaliyuga* have adopted horrible practices and are extremely degraded in mind;

They worship a variety of gods, have forsaken the Name, and are immersed in sin.

Go thou, spread Love and Devotion to the Name, and thus lighten the burdens of the Earth.

Go thou, and glorify the Name of God and destroy hypocrisy.¹⁷

1. Sewaram Singh, 'The Divine Master', p. 53.

No Hindu
no Mussal-
man

After three days, Nanak re-appeared miraculously, distributed all his belongings to the poor and needy and went out of the town to sit down and absorb himself in deep contemplation. After recovering from the trance, he uttered the significant words of his Mission : "There is no Hindu, there is no Mussalman." All this caused quite a consternation and the people said, Nanak had gone mad. A physician was sent for, who tried to feel his pulse to see what was wrong with him. Guru Nanak wrote regarding it :

"The physician is sent for to prescribe a remedy ; he
taketh my hand and feeleth my pulse.

The ignorant physician knoweth not that it is in my mind
the pain is

Physican, go home ; take not my curse with thee.

I am imbued with my Lord ; to whom givest thou
medicine ?"¹

A darvesh

The incident of Bein is rejected by some writers as a whole. According to Mohsin Fani, a *darvesh* came just this time to Guru Nanak. He subdued his mind and it was under his influence that the Guru gave away everything to the poor and declared that the Hindus and the Musalmans were one. Indu Bhushan Bannerji², considers this account to be more reliable, which raises the question whether Nanak had a Guru from whom he got the inspiration for his mission.

Baghdad
inscription

In 1918, during the war, a Sikh Commander visited Baghdad and he writes, as Dr. Bannerji quotes, that he visited outside the city a grave-yard, with a room in the enclosure. In one corner of the room, there was a platform where Nanak was said to have sat and conversed with Shekh Behlol. Behind the platform on the wall was an inscription which Bannerji interprets to mean that this building was constructed by Baba Nanak as a follower of Guru Murad, who had died. This leads Bannerji to conclude that this Guru Murad might possibly be the *darvesh* mentioned by

1. Macauliffe, Vol. I, p. 27.

2. Evolution of the Khalsa.

Mohsin Fani.

According to Maulvi Ghulam Muhammad, the author of the '*Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin*', however, who has been quoted by Mohammad Latif in his '*History of the Punjab*', the Guru was a pupil of one Seid Hussain, and he passed his early life in the company of this Muslim devotee, from whom he imbibed the essential principles of Islam, and as the Maulvi writes, he "made it a practice in his leisure hours to translate literally and make notes and extracts of the moral maxims of Islam."

Pupil of
Seid
Hussain

Yet another note is struck by some writers, especially the Europeans, that Guru Nanak was a pupil of Bhagat Kabir of Benaras. All this causes a confusion.

Of Kabir

A close scrutiny of all the three assertions, however, leads us to quite different conclusion. So far as the Baghdad inscription is concerned, different scholars have interpreted it differently. The inscription which is in the Turkish language, reads thus :

Bagdad
inscription

گورو مراد ایلدی حضرت رب المجید بابائیک فقیروا لیسنا کد غمارت جدید بدید
اعزاد ایدوب کلمدی کد باز نجنه یادی ثواب اجرا دیا فی مرید سید ۹۲۷ سنه

Sevaram Singh interprets it as follows : "Murad saw the demolished building of Hazrat Rab-i-Majid, Baba Nanak, Fakir Aulia, and rebuilt it with his own hands, so that historic memorial may continue from generation to generation, and His murid-i-s'eed (the blessed disciple) may obtain heavenly bliss—year 917 H."

Interpreted

The inscription to which Mr. Bannerji refers seems to have thus been put later on by some descendant in faith of Bahlol, and if the above-quoted interpretation is correct, it is obvious that Nanak was not a disciple of Guru Murad. Some other writers have given a still different interpretation, according to which the first line means : 'In the memory

Another
interpretation

of the Guru of Murad, who himself is God, Baba Nanak Fakir Aulia'. According to this interpretation again, Murad considers rather Nanak as Guru, and not the other way round.

What is
correct ?

The present writer had a lot of discussion with some of his friends on a true photograph of the inscription given above. To us it seems that the whole line from 'Guru' to the word 'Aulia' contains nothing but different adjectives and appellations for the name Nanak. The word 'Murad' itself signifies no proper noun, it stands for the appellation 'Blessed.' Moreover the word 'Guru' is an Indian word, and if at all there was some person named 'Murad', for whom the Guru should have meant some respect, there was less possibility of using the word 'Guru' for him, and more of using the words such as 'Pir', 'Fakir' or some other word of this type. It is clear, therefore, that there existed no person such as 'Murad'. An adjective seems to have been misinterpreted by Dr. Bannerji to mean a proper noun, and making this as foundation, he has raised an edifice to prove that Nanak had a Guru—a '*darvesh*'. All this obviously falls.

No Guru
Murad

Other
arguments

We may take a still another line of arguments. Even if there was some Guru Murad whom the Guru respected, it is difficult to believe that the Guru should have constructed some such memorial. Because this action was against the very temperament of the Guru, who never took a serious interest in matters material and who always considered the physical body of a man as insignificant and unreal sort of dress, which a man changes birth after birth. Moreover the construction of a memorial in the foreign lands, must have caused some considerable trouble to the Guru, and the *Janamsakhis*, which sometimes go into insignificant details regarding his travels, must have made a mention of it, if it were true. It is also strange that the Sikh records, which praise Guru Nanak too much, do not make the mention of even the name of a person who should have guided the Guru in his spiritual experiences.

Nor does the name of Seid Hussain bear a close scrutiny. His name also is not mentioned in any Sikh record, not even for the purpose of a simple meeting between the two. The only Seid Hussain worthy of a mention was the one who was the contemporary of the fifth Guru, and whose hymns were rejected as being unworthy of being included in the Granth. Moreover, it seems difficult to believe that the orthodox Hindu parents of the Guru should have entrusted him in his early life to a Muslim "devotee," so as to be "early introduced to the knowledge of the most esteemed writings of Islam, and initiated into the principles of our most approved doctrines", as the Maulavi writes.

No Seid
Hussain

The case of Kabir, as a teacher of the Guru, also seems difficult to understand. The Guru might have met Kabir, if he was his contemporary at all, at Benaras during his travels when he himself was considerably advanced in his mission. But no contemporary authority makes a mention that he fell under Kabir's influence and became his pupil. Before starting for his travels, the Guru spent the first eighteen years of his life at Talwandi, never moving out to any distant land. At eighteen he moved to Sultanpur, where he lived for over ten years, and here too he never seems to have left for any long trip to visit a distant place like Benaras. Nor is there a document available to prove that Kabir himself ever visited the Punjab and remained there for a long time.

Kabir not
Guru

And lastly, the study of the Guru's hymns itself proves, that he could have no teacher in the mortal body worth the name. According to Malcolm, the author of "Sketch of the Sikhs," Nanak's Guru was God Himself and this is confirmed from the following hymns of the Guru wherein he says that his Guru was *Parbrahm Prameshar*.

God is
Guru

ਅਪਰੋਪਰ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪ੍ਰਮੇਸ਼ਰ
ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸੋਈ ਜੀਓ ।

Be that as it may, when the Guru declared that Hindus and the Muslims were one, the Nawab called him to his presence and asked him if what he said was true, then he should accompany him in the mosque and say prayer to the

Prayer in
the mosque

One God in company with the Muslims. The Guru agreed, but when the prayer started, the Guru kept standing and did not bow, sit and stand after the Muslim fashion. The prayer over, the Nawab enquired as to why he did not do as they did in prayer to the Lord. The Guru replied that the Nawab's prayer was false, as during it when he struck his forehead on the earth, his mind was wandering in the sky, and that the Nawab Dault Khan was purchasing horses at Kabul rather than praying here to God, as Bhai Bala's *janamsakhi* says :

ਮੱਥਾ ਠੋਕੇ ਜ਼ਿਮੀ ਪਰ, ਦਿਲ ਉਠੇ ਅਸਮਾਨ ।

ਘੋੜੇ ਕਾਬਲ ਖਰੀਦ ਕਰੇ, ਦੌਲਤ ਖਾਨ ਪਠਾਨ ॥

All false

On further enquiry, the Guru replied that none of those present there was actually praying to God. Even the chief Qazi among them was at the time following his new-born colt, lest it should fall into a well in his yard. This, according to some Sikh accounts, converted the Nawab into the Guru's follower.

Renunci-
ation

After this, the Guru decided to renounce the domestic life and undertake long travels to preach his mission. It hardly needs be said that this news could never please his parents, much less his wife and his wife's parents. The Guru had to bear the indignation of his father-in-law, Mul Chand, who in fury enquired from the Guru as to why had he married at all and begotten a family, if he had such notions in his mind. Nothing could, however, stop Nanak from his contemplated renunciation.

Mardana
reached

Just this time, Mardana reached Sultanpur. He, like many others, is said to have been sent to reclaim the Guru for the world, but instead of converting the Guru, Mardana himself was converted and becoming the Guru's disciple, he decided to spend the rest of his life with the Guru and accompany him wherever he went. Some of the later chronicles have associated the name of Bala with that of Mardana, as being the Guru's companion during his travels. But this seems to be incorrect.

No Bala

Several arguments may be forwarded to support this assertion. A person named Bala is said to have been engaged by the Guru's father to accompany him when he was tried as a merchant. Next, when the Guru was sent to Sultanpur, Bala accompanied to assist him in the *modikhana*. Bala remained with the Guru at Sultanpur till the end, and the news of his renunciation, according to some biographies, was brought to Talwandi by him. After this, however, his association with the Guru was broken. The *Janamsakhi* of Bala and several others based on it, were almost all of them written a long time after the Guru's death, and therefore, are not at all reliable. The oldest *Janamsakhi* does not mention Bala as one of Guru's companions.¹ Nor is the name of Bala mentioned anywhere in the 'Vars' of Bhai Gurdas. Bhai Gurdas distinctly lays down that Mardana alone accompanied the Guru in his travel to Mecca. Moreover, many stories are told as to how during the course of their travels, sometimes Mardana felt tired, while sometimes he was hungry, thirsty, or wanted to go back home. But we hear no such story regarding Bala. All this and several other available facts prove that there was no body like Bala, who should have accompanied Guru Nanak in his travels².

C—The Udasis

The preparation of a connected and chronologically correct account of the *Udasis* or travels of Guru Nanak has been a very serious problem before the students of the Punjab History. The *Janamsakhis* give such a mixed and disconnected account of his visits at different places that they always make a mess of History and leave one only to conjectures and surmises. Although some writers have tried to draw a connected account from the ballads or the 'vars' of Bhai Gurdas, which seem to be the oldest authentic record available to us in the original form, the account thus drawn can not be conclusive. For the *vars* were prepared by Bhai

Serious
problem

1. See above.

2. See for details, Karam Singh Historian, 'Katik ki Baisakh?' pp. 162—254.

Gurdas about fifty years after the death of Guru Nanak, the historical account given in them is very scrappy, and they lack in chronological exactness. Yet, however, leaving aside the chronolgy, the incidents recorded in the earlier records can not all be rejected as incorrect. Some of them can be ascertained by contemporary historical events, and can also be supported by the words of Guru Nanak himself, which are available to us in the form of his hymns in the holy Granth.

How many
Udasis ?

Based on surmises, as it is, some writers assert that the Guru undertook as many as five travels. His first *Udasi* was towards the east, the second towards the south, the third towards Kashmir, the fourth towards west and the Middle East, and the fifth within the Punjab. Dr. Bannerji supports this view. According to Dr. Mohan Singh, the number of his *Udasis* was four, and he says that he travelled towards east and towards the south in one single trip.¹ Still another view is that besides combining his travel towards east and the south in one trip, he also combined his travel towards the west and that within the Punjab in one trip, thus making the total number of his travels, three. We will accept the first view to be more plausible.

The First Udasi

The discussion of the date of departure on his first travel need not detain us much. If we agree that he took up his service at Sultanpur at the age of eighteen and remained there for about ten years, he must have left for his first *Udasi* at the most at the age of about thirty or thirty one, which means he should have left his home about the year 1500.

About 1500

The start

All agree that in his first travel he started towards the east. He was accompanied in this travel by Mardana, and eating little, avoiding human habitation and leading a very hard life, as according to Bhai Gurdas and Mohsin Fani, the Guru moved steadily forward. Starting from Talwandi, the Guru reached Syedpur (Emnabad).

1. Spokesman, 9th Dec. 1957.

At Syedpur, the Guru stayed with a poor carpenter, Lalo, of low caste. Here an incident took place. An unscrupulous and oppressive person, named Malik Bhago, who ruled this district, just this time held a *Brahmbhoj*, or a feast in which he invited people of all castes. The Guru was also invited to attend. But he excused himself saying he was a *Faqir* and took little interest in such activities. After the *Brahmbhoj* was over, the Mailk on enquiry learnt that a person named Nanak, the Faqir, had not cared to accept his invitation. Second time, a person was sent to fetch him, but the Guru refused. Thereafter five persons came and carried the Guru forcibly to the Malik. When the Malik insisted for explanation, the Guru sent for a piece of Lalo's coarse food and taking it in one hand and the dainties prepared by the Malik in the other, squeezed them both. Milk trickled down the coarse food of Lalo, while from the dainties of the Malik, blood began to flow. On enquiry the Guru explained that Lalo's food was earned by honest labour, and therefore milk flowed down from it ; while the food of the Malik was earned by cruel exactions from the helpless poor, and therefore it was nothing but the blood of the innocents. It was a slap on the face of the Malik, administered in a strange manner. The Malik was put to shame, and the Guru left.

Lalo and
Bhago

Milk and
blood

From Syedpur, the Guru proceeded towards a place in a forest which has been identified by Bhai Santokh Singh, the author of *Nanak Prakash*, as Talamba in the district of Multan. Here he met a person known in the *Janamsakhis* as Sajjan Thug, to whom according to some writers, the first *Manji* was entrusted. Sajjan Thug was a robber who kept a mosque for the Muslims and a temple for the Hindus, where travellers were offered a refuge ; but while they slept at night, they were robbed and murdered. The Guru went there and was served with an utmost devotion. When at night the Thug asked the Guru to retire, the Guru felt that the moment for reclaiming him had arrived. He asked Mardana to accompany him on his rebeck and himself began to sing, thus :

Sajjan
Thag

"Brilliant is the white bronze, but extremely black is its touch

Counterfeit it remains, wash it a hundred times, if you will.

Sujjan (meaning friend) is he that may accompany one on his departure here from ,

Where accounts are demanded, he may be found present to help.

Houses and mansions, well painted on the outside,

Are of no use, when demolished, if devoid of substance within.

.....

Of what avail shall be the services, hospitalities, and other wily acts (chicaneries).

Do thou contemplate on the Name, saith Nanak whereby thou mayst escape thy bonds 1'

Converted

The song was sung in such a manner that Sajjan was deeply affected. He fell at the feet of the Guru and promised to change his manners.

From here the real *Udasi* of the Guru began towards the east. The next important place he visited was Kurukshetra. Just at this time a great fair of the Solar Eclipse was being held here. Thousands of Hindus had collected here to purify themselves, and all sorts of superstitious activities were being performed. Here to attract their attention, the Guru began to cook a deer presented to him by a disciple. The news of the sacrilege spread all around, and a mob of Brahmins and other visitors collected and demanded an explanation as to why the Guru had defiled the atmosphere. Thereupon the Guru sang two songs, a few couplets from one of them, as drawn from Macauliffe, follow.

Defiled

"Fools wrangle about flesh, but know not divine knowledge or meditation on God.

"They know not what is flesh, or what is vegetable, or in what sin consisteth.

"It was the custom of the gods to kill rhinoceroes, roast them and feast."

"Flesh is allowed in the Puranas, flesh is allowed in the books of the Musalmans, flesh hath been used in the four ages.

"Flesh adorneth sacrifice and marriage functions ; flesh hath always been associated with them.

"Women, men, kings, and emperors spring from flesh."

"Thou understandest not thyself, yet thou instructest others ; O Pandit, thou art very wise !"¹

Mr. Bannerji reading, perhaps, only the first song given by Macauliffe, which has not been quoted here, jumps to the conclusion that the whole story is an invention and a superimposition on the basis of the song composed at some other time. He quotes Macauliffe to support his view, and forwards several other arguments. But conclusions drawn by him seem to be hasty, and Macauliffe himself is quoted out of context. A few couplets given above prove it clearly that the songs must have been sung in connection with a serious incident, and we have no reason to disbelieve the *Janamsakhis* that the above mentioned incident did occur.

Bannerji
contra-
dicted

From here the Guru proceeded to Hardwar, where in the Ganges, the Hindus were washing away their sins and throwing water towards east so that it might reach their dead ancestors. In order to exhibit the futility of this action, the Guru entered the water and began to throw water towards the west. On enquiry he said that he was trying to irrigate his field about three hundred miles west from there. When they laughed at him, he said if his water could not reach his fields only three hundred miles in the west, how could their water reach their ancestors thousands of miles in the east ? After this there was a usual discussion and the Guru made many disciples amongst them.

Hardwar

Water to
his field

After this the Guru visited Panipat, where he made a successor of Pir Sheikh Sharaf his disciple. Onwards, the Guru proceeded to Delhi, where at the place of the Gurdwara Nanak Piyao; the Guru is said to have revived a dead

Panipat

1. The Sikh Religion, Vol. 1, pp. 47-49.

Not on
return

elephant of the reigning Lodhi monarch¹. According to some writers he visited Delhi only on his way back. But this does not seem to be correct. While proceeding towards Delhi from Panipat, one comes across the Gurdwara about four miles from the city. Obviously if the Guru visited the place of the Gurdwara after visiting the city on his way back, we should have heard something about his dealings there. Moreover it seems to have been a custom with the Guru to remain only at the outskirts of a vastly inhabited area, and go inside only when necessary. If he visited Delhi on his way back, he should have halted somewhere on the other side of the city and not at a place on the way from the Punjab to Delhi.

Benaras

The next important place of his visit was Benaras where he converted Chatur Das to his faith. Several mythical stories are told regarding his dealings here, into the merits and demerits of which we need not enter. Those who believe Kabir to be the Guru's contemporary say that the Guru met Kabir on this occasion. But the Guru makes no reference to it anywhere.

Gorakh-
mata

At Gorakhmata the Guru is said to have sat under an old pipal-tree, which because of this, became green. Several *jogis* astonished at this, came, conversed with the Guru and were converted. The place thenceforth began to be called Nanakmata. Next the Guru proceeded to Kamrup (Assam) and here again many mythical stories regarding what happened to him and to Mardana are told.

Kalyug
came

In one of the stories the *Janamsakhis* tell us that, Kalyug, the present age of deceitfulness and treachery itself came and met the Guru in a terrible and fearful human form. It threatened him, but the Guru was not afraid. It then offered him the kingdom of the whole world, but the Guru remained unmoved. Finally it fell at his feet. Much of the

1. According to some writers it was Ibrahim Lodhi. But this monarch succeeded to the throne in 1517, whereas we have mentioned above that the Guru started on the trip about 1500. Even if he had started late, it could not be as late as 1516 or 1517. Majority of the writers have failed to take a note of it, a closer study of which might solve an intricacy.

account in the *Janamsakhis* in this connection is steeped in ignorance and superstition. The word 'Kamrup' (Assam, as it was then known) which literally means the mythical Indian god of passion, seems in ignorance to have been taken as a person rather than as the province (as in fact it was). And around it all the stories of the common superstitious beliefs have been interwoven. Similarly the story that from here he went into the country of ants and had his adventures there; and other such stories need not be taken seriously.

'Kamrup'
misinterp-
reted

Mardana being tired of hunger and travels, the Guru decided to march back from this place. On his return in the Punjab, the Guru met Sheikh Brahm, the incumbent of the shrine of Sheikh Farid, at Pakpatan, in the present Montgomery district of Pakistan, and had a lengthy spiritual discussion with him. And with this the first *Udasi* of the Guru was concluded.

Return

Pakpatan

The Second Udasi.

The Guru started on his second *Udasi* in about 1506, and during this he is said to have visited Sirsa, Bikaner, Ajmere, Pushkar, Abu, Ujjain, Bider, Pangal, Anainapur, Godapa, Madras, Nagapatam and Ceylon.¹ During this *Udasi*, or retired life of journey, the Guru was accompanied by two Jats named Saido and Ghebo, on his feet he had sandals of wood, on his head, rolls of rope, in his one hand a staff and in the other a begging bowl². The main purpose of this *Udasi* was to visit Ceylon.

The start
1506

According to Dr. Trump, it is very doubtful that the Guru actually visited Ceylon. For, he says that the *Janamsakhis* represent the king and the inhabitants of that country as common Hindus, where as actually they were Buddhists. On this basis he concludes that the whole story of the Guru's visit to Ceylon is fabricated.³

Did he
visit
Ceylon ?

This argument of Dr. Trump, however, does not seem to be correct. The recent discovery of a manuscript at Dacca

Trump
incorrect

1. See Sewaram Singh, *The Divine Master*, p. 129.

2. Trump, *Adi Granth*, p. XXXIV.

3. *Ibid*, pp. V-VI.

by Gurbux Singh, which according to I. B. Bannerji "purports to be the itinerary of a pilgrim to the Sikh temples in Southern India and Ceylon,"¹ proves beyond doubt that the Guru did visit Ceylon.

According to the old accounts, a Sikh named Mansukh, who belonged to Lahore, and who was a disciple of the Guru, carried trade of considerable importance in Ceylon. It was a daily practice with him to sing the Guru's hymns early in the morning. The words and the meanings of the hymns cast a spell on his neighbour and the king of Ceylon Shiv Nabh² himself fell under his influence. It was this king's desire to meet the Guru, for which the Guru undertook this long journey. The king became the Guru's disciple.

Shiv Nabh
converted

Duni
chand

Kartarpur
founded

On his return the Guru converted Duni Chand, a wealthy Khatri of Lahore. Another wealthy Khatri, Karori, seems to have been converted just this time. With the financial aid of Karori, the Guru founded the city of Kartarpur, on the right bank of the river Ravi; brought his family there and lived there for some time before undertaking his third *Udasi*. Kartarpur thus became the first holy place of the Sikhs.

The Third Udasi

The third travel of the Guru started in 1514, and this time he was accompanied by Hassu, a smith, and Siha, a calico-printer. He took fruits and dry blossoms of Akk tree during this tour. This time, the Guru proceeded to Kashmir, where he met a Pandit, Brahm Das, whose library was two camel-loads. The Guru explained the futility of reading too much, for it developed one's ego and failed in giving one contentment. For peace of mind it was essential that One Word should be contemplated upon.

Brahm Das

ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਗਡੀ ਲਦੀਅਹਿ ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਭਰੀਅਹਿ ਸਾਥ ।

ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਬੇੜੀ ਪਾਈਐ ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਗਡੀਅਹਿ ਖਾਤ ।

ਪੜੀਅਹਿ ਜੇਤੇ ਬਰਸ ਬਰਸ, ਪੜਅਹਿ ਜੇਤੇ ਮਾਸ ।

1. Evolution of the Khalsa; Dacca Review, 1916, p. 376.

2. Dr. Bannerji names him Shiv Nath. But Shiv Nabh seems to be correct. See Glossary of Punjab Tribes and Castes, Vol. 1, p. 687, fn. 4, quoted by Bannerji.

ਪਤੀਅਹਿ ਜੇਤੀ ਆਰਜਾ, ਪਤੀਅਹਿ ਜੇਤੇ ਸਾਸ ।
ਨਾਨਕ ਲੇਖੈ ਇਕ ਗਲ ਹੋਰ ਹਉਮੈ ਝਖਣਾ ਝਾਖ ।

From here the Guru proceeded and ascending the Kailash Parbat, went up to the Mansarowar lake. Here he met some jogis, who being afraid of the political chaos in India, had taken a refuge in these mountains. The Guru condemned them because when they were needed to guide the oppressed humanity, they were hiding themselves there. Thus wrote Bhai Gurdas :

Mansarowar

ਫਿਰ ਪੁਛਨ ਸਿਧ, “ਨਾਨਕਾ । ਮਾਤ ਲੋਕ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਆ ਵਰਤਾਰਾ ?”
ਬਾਬੇ ਆਖਿਆ, “ਨਾਥ ਜੀ । ਸਚ ਚੰਦਰਮਾ ਕੂੜ ਅੰਧਾਰਾ ।
ਪਾਪ ਗਿਰਾਸੀ ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੀ, ਧਉਲ ਖੜਾ ਸਰ ਹੇਠ ਪੁਕਾਰਾ ।
ਸਿਧ ਛਪ ਬੈਠੇ ਪਰਬਤੀ, ਕੋਣ ਜਗਤ ਕੋ ਪਾਰ ਓਤਾਰਾ ?”

From there the Guru, according to some writers, climbed up yet higher mountains and proceeded to Tibet. He also visited China. On his return journey he visited Ladakh, Riasi and Jammu. The readers may excuse a somewhat lengthy, but an interesting extract from Sewaram Singh in this connection. He writes :

Tibet and China

“It seems of interest to mention here that when a Punjab University trip to the Mansarowar Lake was taken a few years ago, the party included Professor Kashmira Singh, then of the Khalsa College at Amritsar. On the authority of Professor Kashmira Singh, Bhai Vir Singh Ji, editor of Santokh Singh's Nanak Prakash, has recorded, in a footnote at page 691 of the Second Volume, that in the Four Cave Temples on the Mansarowar Lake the images of Guru Nanak are also worshipped among others. It is these temples which are the main objects of pilgrimage by the Tibetan Buddhists on one side and Indian Sadhus on the other. Another Sikh, Bhai Didar Singh, has also been travelling in these higher mountains, and supports the view that many indications of an unmistakable character are found everywhere in these hills showing the lasting influence which the Master's visit left on the worship and practices of the various Hill tribes. There is a class of people living in Tibbet and other

The facts

The proofs

Himmalyan countries, who have substituted or added the Mantra, *Om, Ahum Bhadra Guru Parm Sidhi Ham*, for or to the usual Buddhist Mantra, *Om, Mani Padmi Ham*, and it is these men in whose temples the image of Guru Nanak is given prominent place. When questioned, these people explain that *Bhadra Guru* or the Great Master, whom they worship, had appeared in the Punjab, had turned the Mecca, had sweetened the *reetha* (soap-nut) fruit, had defeated the Yogis, had appeared in Ten Forms, and had founded the great *Tirath* at Amritsar."

"These people" he continues, "have been often seen making pilgrimage at Rowal Sar, in Mandi State, and at Amritsar, by the process of *Dandwat*. Sardar Tirath Singh Gharjakhia, a Tahsildar in the Kashmere State Service, who has for many years been in Ladakh and Leh, supports this information and states that he also met several Chinese pilgrims, bound for Amritsar, who told him that Guru Nanak visited their country and established a temple at Nanking and that since then numerous Chinese have worshipped him. The matter, however, requires further investigation."

The Fourth Udasi.

The fourth *Udasi* of the Guru was led towards Mecca. This time the Guru dressed himself in the characteristic Muslim manner of a *Haji*, wearing blue garments, with a carpet and a book under his arm, and carrying in his hands a jug (*Kuza*) and a staff (*Assa*). The Guru commenced his journey about the year 1519, and though the *Janamsakhis* say that he travelled alone, according to Bhai Gurdas, he was accompanied by Mardana.

It is a well known story as to what happened at Mecca, where the Guru lay down with his feet towards the *Ka'aba*, was kicked as *Kafir* for this action of his, and an effort was made to turn his feet away which failed; as according to the *Janamsakhis*, *Ka'aba* itself moved to which-so-ever direction the Guru's feet were moved. The rationalist would explain it away that it was an allegorical explanation of the effect that

1. The Divine Master, pp. 139—141.

The start
1519

Ka'aba
turned

was left in the mind of those who conversed with the Guru, and who were told that the house of God, who was All-Pervading, lay wherever one looked. But the Islamic traditions do support that *Ka'aba* moved with the Guru's feet. May be, those present were hypnotised in such a manner that in their mind the Guru's feet were associated with *Ka'aba* and they felt as if *Ka'aba* actually revolved.

After visiting Mecca and Medina, the Guru moved onwards to north, and travelling through Jerusalem, Demascus and Alleppo, turned north-eastwards and stayed for about four months at Baghdad. Basing perhaps his views on a composition named *Nasihatinama*, supposed to have been written by the Guru, Syed Muhammad Latif writes in his History of the Punjab, that the Guru also visited 'Stamboul', where he conversed with the Sultan of Turkey and converted him. Bhai Mani Singh also writes in his *Janamsakhi* that Karoon, to whom the *Nasihatinama* is addressed, was the Sultan of Turkey; while Bhai Gian Singh, who wrote his 'History of the Sikh Gurus' towards the end of the nineteenth century, describes Karoon to be the Sultan of Egypt. But a close study of the history of all these countries, as well as that of Soudan and other adjoining States, shows that no king of the name of Karoon ruled anywhere during the lifetime of the Guru. Moreover, the *Nasihatinama* is not included in the Granth, and its language and style bear the least of any of the characteristics of the Guru's poetry. Obviously, it is a spurious document.

Met
Karoon ?

No Karoon

At Baghdad the Guru met and converted one Shah Behlol. Swami Anandacharya¹ mentions that during his visit at Baghdad, he found there an inscription dated 912 *Hejri*, written in the Arabic language, which when translated, means :

Shah
Behlol
converted

"Here spake the Hindu Guru Nanak to Fakir Behlol, and, for these sixty winters, since the Guru left Iran, the soul of Behlol has rested on the Master's word—like a bee poised on a dawnlit honey-rose."

1. His work entitled 'Snow Birds'.

Two
different

A reference has already been made to an inscription on a platform, in which the words 'Guru Murad' are mentioned. Obviously these two are different inscriptions. While it is not certain where did Swami Anandacharya find his inscription, it is possible that his inscription might be the same as the one some Sikh soldiers saw outside the outer door of the same building, during the first World War, but which was not decipherable.

Hassan
Abdal

On his return journey, the Guru visited Hassan Abdal, about 30 miles to the north-west of Rawalpindi. Here he converted one, Bawa Wali, living at the top of a hill overlooking the town. Before his conversion, out of his jealousy for the Guru's position, Wali is said to have tried to kill the Guru by hurling down a huge rock, which was stopped by the Guru by his hand, and on which the hand-print still exists. At the site of this incident, the Gurdwara *Punja Sahib* was later constructed.

Punja
Sahib

The Fifth Udasi

Within
Punjab

The fifth travel was undertaken within the Punjab itself. Several mythical stories are told. The Guru visited Pakpattan once again, and had a long conversation with Sheikh Brahm. Then the Guru proceeded through Dipalpur, Kanganpur, Sultanpur, Verowal, Jalalabad and Kiria etc. and converted many Pathans and others to his faith. Then through Batala, the Guru moved to Sayedpur, where he reached on the eve of its capture by Babur in 1524. Here according to the *Janamsakhis*, the Guru and Mardana were imprisoned along with hundreds of the other inhabitants of the place. The Guru was condemned to manual labour and was asked to carry a load on his head. But the load was noticed to be moving with the Guru one cubit above his head without any support.

Imprisoned

Met Babur

The incident was immediately reported to Babur, who, according to old Sikh records, himself came to see, and was impressed as a result of a conversation with the Guru. He ordered the Guru's release, but the Guru refused unless

others were released along with him. Thereupon, Babur ordered all to be set at liberty.

There is no mention of the Guru's meeting with Babur in the contemporary Mughal records. But there is a possibility that the Guru, whose heart ached at the sight of the horrors and destruction brought about by the invader, should have personally interviewed him, though the incident might have been passed by the Mughals as insignificant.

The fact

After this the Guru moved through Pasrur, Sialkot, to Mithankot, in Dera Ghazikhan district, and there he converted one Mian Mitha. Thereafter, the Guru moved to Kartarpur, on the Bank of the Ravi, where he settled down and spent the rest of his years.

To Kartarpur

The Last Years

At Kartarpur the Guru lived with his children, the life of a householder. Here he consolidated his work. Bhai Gurdas tells us how the Guru lived here a very regular life, getting up early in the morning, taking bath and then holding the morning prayers. After this the *langar* or the community kitchen was held. There was prayer in the day, and then in the evening, after which the *langar* was held once again, where everybody partook of the food. At the time of going to bed, the *Kirtansohila* was read and everybody went to sleep.

Householder

Here firm foundations were laid for the system of Sikh congregations and the *langar*, both of which played so significant a part in the development of the Sikh church. During this time, the Guru's visits outside the town, became very rare. He once visited Achal Batala, on the Shivrati festival, where he had a lengthy conversation with a *jogi*, Bhangarnath, who questioned him as to why he had renounced a hermit's life. The Guru justified his action saying that the life of a householder was the best to obtain God through. He had completed his mission outside, and therefore he now wanted to play his part as a householder. This remark of the Guru distinguishes the Sikhs from those who believe that God can be obtained only by renouncing the world and going over to

Firm foundation

Met Bhangarnath

the forests and the mountains, as we shall study later, once again.

Bhai Lehna
installed

As the end of the Guru's life in this mortal world drew anigh the Guru asked Bhai Buddha ji to instal Bhai Lehna as the Guru to succeed him. Buddha ji put the anointing of saffron on Bhai Lehna's forehead, and seated him on the *Manji*. Guru Nanak placing the offering of five coppers and a coconut, and going round him for five times, bowed before the disciple Lehna, and Lehna thus became Guru, the second Nanak to bear the torch of the Sikh faith and free the suffering humanity from ignorant fanaticism and religious persecutions.

Prepara-
tion

"The master then prepared to depart. He sang the Divine Wedding Song :

*"Sing ye, my comrades, sing now my wedding song.
Sing the song of His praise.
Sing the song of my Creator.
Sing the song of Him, who knoweth no fear.
I would be a sacrifice to this wedding song;
For in this song lieth the everlasting bliss.
My Lord careth for the smallest life,
The Bounteous Giver meeteth needs of each.
Invaluable are His Gifts;
Who can praise Him ?
The Auspicious Day has dawned,
The Hour of wedding is come.
Come, comrades, and anoint the Bride.
Pour your blessings, O Comrades,
For the Bride meeteth her Lord.
Take this message to all,
For this call cometh for all.
Ever and always remember Him, Who sendeth down the
call;
When the time for the call arrives."*

Thus the Guru departed, blending his soul with the

1. Shohila Rag Gauri Dipki, M. I. From Sewaram Singh 'The Divine Master', pp. 224—25.

Eternal and Almighty. The Bride became one with her Bridegroom. The dead body that remained is said to have been claimed by Hindus to be cremated, while Muslims claiming him to be a Pir, wanted to bury his body. The Guru had covered himself with a clean white sheet when he slept for departure, and the Hindu and the Muslim followers had placed their flowers respectively on each side. After the quarrel, when the sheet was removed, the body was no-where to be seen, though the flowers remained, which each of the parties took away.

Bride met
Bride-
groom

The Guru had preached Hindu Muslim unity, but the people were yet too ignorant to understand. The torch was left alight in the hands of Bhai Lehna, now Guru Angad, who was to show them the path !

Yet
ignorant.

CHAPTER IV

THE CREED OF GURU NANAK

As Preached by Him and Expounded by his Successors

The religion founded by Guru Nanak, and further expounded and carried from place to place by his successors, cannot boast of many doctrines. Its basic philosophy can conveniently be summed up in two words : 'Unity and Fraternity.'

A—Unity

One God

The scripture of the Sikhs starts with the numeral 1, which precedes the word *Om* and is pronounced as *Oangkar*. *Oangkar* means God, and the numeral qualifying it leads to the meaning: there is but One God. According to some, 1 signifies unit. Even if this be so, it would lead to the meaning that God is Unit, and out of It everything emanates.

He is
truth

Karta-
purakh

After having established the principle of the unity of God, the scripture proceeds to give His attributes. The next word thus is '*Satnam*', which means that if you want to name Him, you may call him '*Sat*', or 'Truth'. The next word is *Kartapurakh*, meaning He is the Creator. This word seems to have raised a lot of confusion in some minds. At the first sight, the word *Kartapurakh* leads one to conclude as if Guru Nanak believed in God, who has no connection with the Universe, except that sitting somewhere in the heaven, He creates it, as an artisan manufactures an article; and then destroys it when he so desires. But this is wrong. Those who have not studied these first words of the scripture, and have come across some such words in its body as :

ਦੂਜਾ ਕਾਹੇ ਸਿਮਰੀਐ, ਜਮੇ ਤੇ ਮਰ ਜਾਇ,

ਏਕੋ ਸਿਮਰੇ ਨਾਨਕਾ, ਜੋ ਜਲ ਬਲ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ ।

which mean : 'Why worship the second, who takes birth and

dies ; worship the One, O Nanak, who pervades the waters and the lands' ; would come to the conclusion that God has been identified with the creation, and means that he is nothing but the creation itself. But this is wrong. Guru Nanak's conception of God is in fact neither purely of theism nor of pantheism. Actually what the Sikh philosophy regarding God means is that God is one, the Creator, and He creates every thing out of His ownself. Thus says Griffin : "In the same way as Darwin has taught the evolution of species," so did the doctrine of Nanak proclaim, not the creation of Nature by the All-Powerful out of nothing, but the infinite division of His own essence into a plurality of forms."¹ Thus though the creation is God himself, yet it is different from God, and as Bhai Jodh Singh writes : "When this is destroyed, the phenomenon as a separate existence ceases, but God still is there²." Guru Arjan brings out the thing clearly in his *Jaisri* :

Real
meaning

O give me, give me some intelligence of my Beloved.
I am bewildered at the different accounts I am given of
Him.

Some say He is altogether outside the world ;
Others assert that He is altogether contained in it.
His colour cannot be seen ; nor can His features be
distinguished ;

O happy wives, tell me truly—
He dwelleth in everything ; He liveth in every heart ;
Yet He is not blended with anything ; He is distinct.

And again as Guru Teg Bahadur writes in the *Dhanasri* :

Why dost thou go to the forest in search of Him.
He dwelleth in everything, yet he is ever distinct ; He
abideth in thee as well.

As fragrance is in a flower, or reflection in a mirror,
So doest God dwell inside everything ; seek Him there-
fore in thy heart.

1. Griffin, 'Ranjit Singh,' p. 55

2. Some Studies in Sikhism, p. 10.

Immanence
transcendence
combined

In brief, Teja Singh writes ; "the Gurus have combined the Aryan idea of immanence with the Semitic idea of transcendence¹, without taking away anything from the unity and the personal character of God²."

Fearless
and just

No
transmigration

Self-made

To come back to the first passage of the Granth, the next word in it, as we are discussing, is *nirbhow*, and then *nirwair*, which mean He is fearless and is enemy of none; or that He is just. He is *akalmurat* and *ajuni*, or that He never dies, nor does He undergo transmigration. The next word, *saibhang*, is again potent of its significance. It means He is self-made. At another place in the 'Japji', the first passage of which we are discussing, we come across the following verse :

ਬਾਪਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਇ, ਕੀਤਾ ਨ ਹੋਇ
ਆਪੇ ਆਪ ਨਿਰੋਜਨ ਜੋਇ ।

It means : 'He cannot be set up, nor can he be created. He is self-existent and pure³. Or in other words it means, He cannot be set up as some people hew his images out of rocks and set Him up in the temples or other places of worship with due ceremonies. The word *saibhang* thus condemns the practice of *idol-worship* among the Hindus.

No idols

Formless

Besides the attributes given above, the Sikh scripture at several places, has many other attributes given to Him. The God of Guru Nanak, thus, is Formless, yet He can be seen clearly :

ਤੁਧ ਰੂਪ, ਨ ਰੇਖ, ਤੂੰ ਵਰਣਾਂ ਬਾਹਰਾ
ਨਾਨਕ ਕਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ, ਦਿਸੈ ਜਾਹਿਰਾ ॥

He is love

He is love, and pervades here and there, in the four quarters and the four corners, in the form of love :

ਜਤ੍ਰ ਤਤ੍ਰ ਦਿਸਾ ਵਿਸਾ ਹੋਇ ਫੋਲਿਓ ਅਨੁਰਾਗ ॥

1. Ramnuja too had a similar belief, as Dr. Radakrishna writes—To Ramnuja God is both the transcendent and the immanence ground of the world.
2. Sikhism, p. 3.
3. See Sewaram Singh, 'The Divine Master,' p. 238.

Thus, writes Cunningham : "Instead of circumscribed divinity, the anthropomorphous God of Ramanand and Kabir, he loftily invokes the Lord as the one, the sole, the timeless being, the creator the self-existent, the incomprehensible, and the everlasting!" And writes Frederic Pincot : "For Nanak there was no such thing as a God for the Hindus, a God for the Muhammadans, and a god or gods for the outer heathen; for him there was but one God, not in the likeness of man, like Rama, not a creature of attributes and passions, like the Allah of Muhammad; but one sole, indivisible, self-existent, incomprehensible, timeless, all pervading,—to be named, but otherwise indescribable and altogether lovely. Such was Nanak's idea of the Creator and Sustainer of the phenomenal world, and it was a conception which at once abrogated all petty distinctions of creed, and sect, and dogma, and ceremony. The realisation of such a God shatters the sophistries of the theologian and the quibblings of the dialecticians, it clears the brow from the gloom of abstruse pondering over trifles, and leaves the heart free for the exercise of human sympathies"².

Nanak's
GodCunning-
gham

Pincot

Dr. Trump views that Guru Nanak did not forbid "the Worship of other gods on the ground of the unity of the Supreme." But Guru Nanak writes at one place : "A hundred thousand of Mohamads, a milion of Brahmas, Vishnus, and a hundred thousand Ramas stand at the gate of the Most High. These all perish. God alone is immortal." This means that the worship of all, Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma, Rama and the like, has been condemned by Guru Nanak, and Dr. Trump stands contradicted. But the problem is not solved. Because if Guru Nanak had condemned the worship of these different gods, as persons like Teja Singh, in their anxiousness to prove Guru Nanak as a revolutionary, assert, how could the hymns of Jaidev, the worshipper of Krishna, or Ramanand, the worshipper of Vishnu, and the hymns of other such Bhaktas be included in the Granth by the later Gurus? Macauliffe forwards his view in this connection. In his

Worship of
other gods

1. History of the Sikhs.

2. His essay on 'Sikhism' in *The Religious Systems of the world*.

An opinion

opinion it was to enable the readers to have the idea of historical development of Sikh reformation, that the hymns of these Bhaktas were included¹. But this seems to be an effort of putting a modern idea into Guru Arjan's mind. Moreover the Granth being the embodiment of the Sikh Gurus and occupying rather such high place that the Gurus themselves gave it a seat higher than theirs, it is difficult to believe that even a sentence in it should have been included which was opposed to the teachings of Guru Nanak. At

Incorrect

another place, Macauliffe gives a further explanation of his views : "The Hindu Bhagats for the most part began life as worshippers of idols, but by study and contemplation arrived at a system of monotheism which was appreciated by Guru Arjan."² Namdev, thus, according to Macauliffe, was an idolatorous in his boyhood, condemned Hindu superstitions at manhood and began to conform to the Sikh ideas in his old age³. But this also does not seem to explain the position.

Correct position

The case might have been so with Namdev, but not with all. The correct position seems to be that Guru Arjan while compiling the Granth, was concerned with the spirit of devotion and self-surrender in the philosophy of the Bhaktas. If the idea behind the object of worship was not narrow-mindedness, it mattered little whether one worshipped one divinity or other. What is in fact condemned in the philosophy of Guru Nanak and his successors is not these divinities, such as Rama, Krishna and Vishnu, but the magnification given to them at the very great expense of obscuring the vision of the One Supreme Being over and above them all. Mohsin Fani seems to have stated the position clearly. "Nanak", he says, "praised the religion of the Musalmans, as well as the Avtaras and the divinities of the Hindus; but he knew that these objects of veneration were created and not creators, and he denied their real descent from heaven⁴."

1. See Macauliffe, vol. I, Preface.

2. Macauliffe, vol. VI, p. 1.

3. Ibid, p. 40.

4. Dabistan, Vol. II, pp. 248—249.

How to Obtain Him ?

Bhai Kahn Singh quotes in his book 'Ham Hindu Nahin'¹, a verse from Guru Nanak's Hymns to prove that the Guru rejected the Hindu sacred books as useless to help in attaining God. There are indeed many more verses written by other Gurus and Bhaktas which could be construed to mean what Bhai Kahn Singh has brought Guru Nanak's verse to imply. Kabir thus writes :

Not by
mere
reading

*"What availeth thee to read the Vedas and Puranas ?
It is like loading a donkey with sandal whose perfume
he valueth not."*

But to give to such verses the interpretation that Bhai Kahn Singh has given, seems difficult to understand. Because Guru Nanak himself writes at one place :

"The four books and the four Vedas, which were promulgated in the world.

*Came down from high under the orders of the Lord
God."*

And Kabir at another place clearly writes :

*"The words of the sacred texts are as seas of milk :
For that ocean let the Guru be the churning staff.
Be thou the churner of that milk ;
Why shouldst thou be despoiled of thy butter."*

The fact seems to be that Guru Nanak condemned scripturalism, not scriptures. There is no doubt that the real significance of these sacred books had been forgotten when the Bhakti reformers organised their movement. A mere reading of the sacred books was supposed to be a merit high enough to get one salvation. But this was all condemned by Guru Nanak, according to whom God could not be obtained without meditating and actually working on what these sacred books said.

1. See P. 60.

2. Macauliffe, Vol. VI. p. 247.

3. Ibid, p. 219.

Not by
pilgrimages

Just as God can not be obtained by mere reading of the Vedas, similarly there is no need of going about on pilgrimages to obtain Him. Thus Guru Nanak writes :

"The Ganges, the Jamna, the meeting of these rivers at Tribeni, Prayag, the seven oceans,

Alms, charity, and worship are all contained in God's name. I recognize Him as the One God in every age.

Nanak, in the month of Magh, if I repeat God's name with great delight, I bathe at the sixty eight places of pilgrimage.¹"

Bannerji's
view

Here Dr. Bannerji seems to have taken considerable pains by forwarding several arguments to prove that the Guru in fact "had nothing to say against charity, penance, or pilgrimage as such but denounced them as he found them in actual practice. He attacked the perversion, not the customs themselves."² While we might have nothing to say against him upto this point, it looks difficult for us to understand the necessity which compelled him—after conceding that Guru Amar Das's visit at Kurukshetra, the Jamna and the Ganges might have been undertaken to preach his teachings rather than as a pilgrimage—to assert on the authority of Guru Gobind Singh that Guru Teg Bahadur did believe in going on pilgrimages, because as according to Guru Gobind Singh, when he came to Prayag, "he passed his days in charity and other meritorious acts"³ If Guru Amar Das's visit to these places was not a pilgrimage, the mere fact that Guru Teg Bahadur passed his days in charity at Prayag could not be construed to mean that he had gone there for the sake of a pilgrimage. His purpose also might have been to preach at Prayag the gospel of Guru Nanak. But as it was his habit, wherever he went he performed meditations and did charitable acts, he might have done so at Prayag as well, especially so because

Difficult

1. Macauliffe, i, p. 144.

2. The Evolution of the Khalsa.

3. Bachitra Natak. The actual words of Guru Gobind Singh are :
"jab hi jat Tribeni bhae Punndan din karat bitae."

the place was generally visited by a great number of beggars and other poor persons.

Any way, there seems to be no doubt in the fact, as Dr. Bannerji agrees, that in the teachings of Guru Nanak, pilgrimage as a means of obtaining God, occupies very insignificant place, if at all it does occupy some.

Insigni-
ficant

The idol-worship was also condemned as a means of obtaining God. Idols might be an aid in developing one's power of concentration, after which one might expand one's vision to realise God as formless and Omnipresent ; but if their worship is taken as an end in itself and not as a means, the purpose is defeated. In this manner God was imprisoned in the temples, outside of which one could commit any crime, but inside, where God in the shape of idol lives, one must have an attitude of reverence and morality. There is no doubt thus that the idols had in this manner, failed to serve their purpose, so far as the general mass of the people were concerned, and therefore, their worship was condemned by Guru Nanak, to which we have already referred above. Kabir also condemned idol worship in his characteristic humorous manner saying that if God could be obtained by worshipping stones, he would worship mountains. Guru Arjan says in the *Suhi Rag* :

No
Idolatory

Kabir says
Guru Arjan

*"The stone which man calls God,
Takes him and drowns him along with it."*¹

Nor can God be obtained by ritualism and rites, as the third Guru said :

No rites

*"Burnt be those rites and formalities,
By practising which I forget my Beloved."*²

God can be obtained through Bhakti, which involves constant absorption in the Name, in the Lord of Love. *Nam japna* or *simrna*, which has so scoffingly been translated by Trump as "muttering of God's name," involves in fact an eight-fold exercise, as explained at several places in the

By Bhakti

1. Harbans Singh, The Message of Sikhism.

2. Ibid.

Granth. This is (1) Purity of mind and body, (2) Meditation on the meaning of a hymn, (3) keeping silence, (4) Conforming one's life and deeds to the sense of the hymns, or good action, (5) Concentration of mind, (6) Contentment and patience, (7) Faith and reverence in intellect, and finally, (8) *Satsang* or company of holy men. Mere mechanical or exhibitional repetition of Name or *Simran* will bring no good results. The *Simran* may be vocal or silent, but it must involve mind, internally, like the back-ground music in a theatre, so that there is a sense of oneness with God. This in turn leads one to *Samadhi*, or the ecstatic state, which in a *Janam Sakhi*, has been described as follows :

The *Simran*

The blessed state

*"In the blessed State of 'Nam'
When the self is lost to us,
We cease to think, we do not think
No thought of pleasure, pain or grief,
Hopes and fears cease to be ;
Silence deep, no sense of self,
The self is merged in the greater Self,
The little self is lost to view,
And is merged in boundless Bliss.
We rise above self-consciousness,
No feeling then of 'I amness,'
Nor of heaven, nor of earth,
Nor of any thinking thought,
Oneness only with the One,
Wedlock of the Soul and God¹."*

Satsang

Some of the points of the eight-fold exercise may here be explained. *Satsang*, or the company of holy men as a point of exercise for obtaining God has played a very significant role in the history of the Sikhs. The *Satsang* has manifold advantage, as the Guru remarked : "The advantages of assembling together I cannot enumerate." The company of holy-men besides being an aid in the ripening of one's spiritual thoughts, helps one in the social and organisational field as well. And this will be discussed in the next chapter.

1. Balwant Singh, Spokesman of 16th Dec., 1957.

Another point of exercise, i. e. conforming one's life and deeds to the sense of hymns, or good action, has also been laid considerable stress upon. Guru Nanak thus says : "God places salvation in good works and uprightness of conduct." This importance of good action in one's life has led Payne to remark : "In the doctrines of Nanak morality holds a higher place than in those of many other Hindu reformers..... Loyalty, chastity, honesty, justice, mercy, charity, and temperance are among the virtues on which vital stress is laid ; while evil-speaking, covetousness, anger, selfishness, extravagance, and cruelty are denounced with equal vigour. The daily practice of cleanliness, of almsgiving, and of abstinence from animal food is strictly enjoined¹." But this stress on good action must not in any way be interpreted to mean that good actions without the knowledge of God will suffice. "Good actions were nothing in themselves," writes Latif, "but the knowledge of the true God was the only way to salvation." One's actions must be inspired by an intense desire to please God and to serve fellow-men, as Guru Arjan writes in *Gauri Mala* :

Good
action

"Without pleasing God all actions are worthless.

Repetition of mantras, austerities, set ways of living, or deeds of merit leave us destitute even before our journey ends.

You won't get even half a copper for your fasts and special programmes of life.

These things, O brother, won't do there, for the requirements of that way are quite different²."

To please
God

But despite doing all this, one can obtain God only if God Himself is pleased to grant His sight. After making all his efforts, as Guru Nanak writes, "If it pleases God man crosses the terrible ocean." The will of God in fact is given so much importance that even a meditation on Him and repetition of his name can be done only if it pleases Him. This means as if man is quite helpless, and right or wrong, whatever he does,

Man's
helplessness

1. A Short History of the Sikhs, p. 27.

2. Teja Singh, 'Sikhism,' p. 6.

The fact

he does it only under the will of God. Archer also has been led to write : "there is a touch of fatalism every now and then in Nanak's gospel¹." But further he says that Guru Nanak's God is benevolent, and He is ever ready to grant one an opportunity for good action, only if one is sincere enough to have it. Here one gets an echo of Gita's philosophy where Krishna says : "To those who are ever devoted and worship me with love, I give that knowledge by which they may attain me."

Self-surrender

Guru Nanak teaches one a complete self-surrender, as he says : "Surrender thyself, so mayst thou meet the Lord." Dr. Trump has concluded from this that in a religion where highest object of life is the extinction of individual existence, there can be no room for a system of moral duties". There could however be nothing more absurd than this. To deny that one of the greatest objects of the Sikh Guru's teaching was the high principles of morality, is to act as a blind man. In fact numerous quotations could be given from the *Granth*, where nothing but high principles of morality have been taught. Moreover self-surrender too has here been simply misinterpreted. The relation between man and God as described at different places, should be as it is between bride and her bridegroom. Guru Nanak writes :

As a bride

"She is decorated with the Guru's word ; her body and soul are with her Beloved.

With hands clasped she standeth waiting on Him, and offereth Him true supplication.

She is imbued with the love of her Darling ; she dweleth in fear of True One ; and, when dyed with His love, her colour is the true one.

She is called the handmaiden of the Beloved, and answereth to the name of Lali².

Her true affection is not sundered ; the True One blendeth her with Himself³."

1. The Sikhs.

2. The jewel or precious one

3. Macauliffe, i, p. 268

And just as a faithful bride gets supreme pleasure in her complete surrender to her virtuous husband, a man gets supreme bliss by surrendering himself to God. Self-surrender to God here infact means nothing more than a suppression of the earthly cravings.

The Guru teaches the killing of ego for those who desire to obtain Him. He writes : "Throw down thy heap of terrible egoism in the company of the saints ; so that thou might find rest, abide in peace and blest with the sight of God."

Kill ego

Renunciation of the world has no place in the teachings of Guru Nanak. One is to live as a householder and live pure amidst impurities of the world. He says : "He alone will know the path who earns what he eats and gives a portion of it to others". And one has to kill in himself the sexual attraction, anger, covetousness, affection with attachment, and arrogance, to introduce purity into his life.

No renunciation

Guru

In the philosophy of Sikhism, Guru occupies a supreme position, and without him the attainment of God is considered impossible. The necessity of Guru has been felt in all ages. Rama was sent in the *Traita Yuga*, Krishna in the *Dwapar* and Nanak in the *Kaliyuga*. And "Sikhism, which literally means the path of discipleship," writes Bhai Jodh Singh, "lays, therefore great stress upon the necessity of having a Guru¹."

The qualifications that a true Guru must possess are that he should have realised God, he should believe in charity and love, he should be unselfish, he should be unattached, and he should be very humble, not claiming any superiority over his fellow men. Guru takes his disciple, when he has obtained Him, as his equal, nay superior to himself. Guru Nanak thus writes : "He who calls himself a Sikh, let him get up early and meditate on the Name of God." And when he does like that, "the servant Nanak prays for the dust of the feet of such disciple, who

His qualifications

1. Some Studies in Sikhism, p. 17.

himself remembers the Lord and makes others remember Him."

His
position

The position that Guru occupies in the Sikh scheme of religion, has been a subject of controversy. Guru Ram Das says:

"I have churned the ocean of the body, I have seen a rare thing come to view.

The Guru is God and God is the Guru ; Nanak there is no difference between them my brethren¹."

And again, Guru Arjan says in *Gauri Bavanakhri*, that the revered Guru is the Creator, or that he is the Supreme Brahma, the Supreme God. This raises a doubt in some minds as if the Sikh Gurus taught their Sikhs a sort of man-worship. A closer study, however, dispels all these misgivings.

Sikh idea

The Sikh idea of Guru, in fact, was something abstract, impersonal and continuous. We learn that everytime a Guru appointed his successor, he put five *paisa* and a coconut before him, and fell down at the feet of the successor. This signifies that the 'Guruship' was not something concerned with the body of the person who held it. The importance was rather attached to the 'spirit' which 'descended' from one holder to the other. Guru Gobind Singh himself writes in his *Bachitra Natak* :

A spirit

*"Nanak assumed the body of Angad
And made his religion current in the world.
Afterwards Nanak was called Amar Das
And one lamp is lit from another
The holy Nanak was revered as Angad,
Angad was recognised as Amar Das,
And Amar Das became Ram Das.
The pious saw this, but not the fools,
Who thought them all distinct ;
But some rare person recognised that they were all
one."*

1. Macauliffe, ii, 312.

Mohsin Fani writes¹ at one place that in a letter to him, Guru Hargobind actually signed as 'Nanak,' and it appears, says Dr. Bannerji², that in their private correspondence all the Gurus followed this practice. In the *Adi Granth*, too, the individual Gurus have not given their names in their hymns ; they have all used the appellation 'Nanak', and, are distinguished only from the number of the *Mehla* given at the beginning of their hymns.

All Nanaks

The doubts are completely removed when we learn that the Sikh Gurus took special pains to see that they themselves should not be worshipped as Krishna and Rama had been. Guru Gobind Singh thus clearly writes in his *Bachitra Natak* : "Those who call me Supreme Lord, will go to hell." And Guru Ram Das completely clears the position when he says :

No man-worship

"The Word is the Guru and the Guru is the Word ; in the word is the essence of ambrosia.

The worshipper who obeyeth what the Guru's word teacheth shall be saved by the Guru in person³."

This means that it is the Guru's word, or his message regarding God which is to be taken as Guru and identified with Him, the body which utter the word, howsoever respectable personally, can not be identified with God. The Sikh conception of Guru, thus, is something impersonal, abstract and continuous. The Sikh Guru, or the 'Word' does not die with the death of the body who utters the 'Word.' It continued after the death of Nanak's body, in the body of Angad, and so on till the last Guru, "Guru Gobind Singh." But before Guru Gobind Singh died, the 'Word' was embodied in *Guru Granth*, which still continues living, and before whom, the Gurus themselves, during their life-time, occupied a seat lower in the congregation.

Word-worship

Karma and Transmigration

So far as Karma and Transmigration are concerned, thus

1. Dabistan, ii, pp. 53—55.

2. Evolution of the Khalsa.

3. Macauliffe, ii, p. 339.

writes Archer : "No strictly Indian thinker or reformer during the last two thousand years has been able to ignore them, or has ignored them, and Nanak was to that extent an Indian¹." Rav Das thus writes in *Asa* in the *Granth* that human beings and other creatures wherever they might be, are controlled by Karma, and are subject to the noose of *Kal* (Death) :

ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਜਹਾਂ ਜਹਾਂ ਲਗ ਕਰਮ ਕੇ ਬਸਿ ਜਾਇ ।

ਕਾਲ ਫਾਸ ਅਬਧ ਲਾਗੇ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਉਪਾਇ ।

Karma

Eighty-four lakh

There are supposed to be eighty-four lakh types (*yonis*) of creatures in the world, and of all of them, a birth in the human body is supposed to be the best, as St. Paul of Sikhism, Bhai Gurdas writes :

ਚੇਰਾਸੀ ਲਖ ਜੋਨ ਵਿਚ ਉਤਮ ਜਨਮ ਸੁ ਮਾਨਸ ਦੇਹੀ ।

Human body

And a man's birth in the human body is his only chance of working for salvation. Guru Nanak admonishes in this connection : 'O man, you have for many births been a worm, a moth, elephant, fish, deer, bird, snake, horse, ox, trees and plants, now that you have obtained the human body, it is a rare thing and you must now make a good use of it and work for your salvation'²:

ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਭਏ ਕੀਟ ਪਤੰਗਾ, ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਗਜ ਮੀਨ ਕੁਰੰਗਾ ।

ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਪੰਖੀ ਸਰਪ ਹੋਇਓ, ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਹੋਵਰ ਬ੍ਰਿਖ ਜੋਇਓ । ੧

ਮਿਲ ਜਗਦੀਸ ਮਿਲਨ ਕੀ ਬਰੀਆ । ਚਰੇਕਾਲ ਇਹ ਦੇਹ ਸੰਜਰੀਆ ।

ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖ ਕਰ ਉਪਾਇਆ । ਲਖ ਚਉਰਾਸੀ ਜੋਨ ਭ੍ਰਮਾਇਆ ।

Transmigration

Evolution

The writings of Mrs. Anne Besant and Bishop Lead Beater reveal that one's birth in the human body is in the process of evolution, and once a birth in the human body is taken, one can not go back into the body of any other creature. But Kabir writes as if it were possible that owing to one's bad *Karma* one might be born as a creature of four feet, two horns and dumb in speech, to get stroke upon a stroke as beatings.³

1. Archer, 'The Sikhs'.

2. Asa Mohalla I.

3. Gujri Kabir.

ਚਾਰਿ ਪਾਵ ਦੁਇ ਸਿੰਗ ਗੁੰਗ ਮੁਖ ਤਬ ਕਸੇ ਗੁਨ ਗਈਹੈ ।
ਉਠਤ ਬੈਠਤ ਠੇਗਾ ਪਰਿਹੈ ਤਬ ਕਤ ਮੂਡ ਲੁਕਈਹੈ ।

The possibility perhaps is that after human birth one might go back into the body of some other creature as a result of his bad actions, as a temporary measure, but he will not have to undergo the process of evolution anew, which would involve perhaps his birth in the minerals, then in plants, animals and then in the human body, the eighty-four creatures as the theosophists believe.

The possibility

So far as the salvation and the union with God is concerned, Payne writes : "Where as the Hindu regards this goal as infinitely distant, Nanak proclaimed it to be within the reach, not indeed of his followers, but of such of them as should attain to the highest merit; and he claimed the power to exempt, from transmigration, those among his disciples whom he counted as "the elect." The possibility of exemption, however remote, was one of the most attractive features of Sikhism in the days of the Gurus and brought in many adherents".

The exemption

Payne here seems to have erred on one point. The Gurus nowhere seem to have claimed the power of exemption. A man seeking salvation has to perform such acts as lead to salvation and the claim of the Gurus and for that matter of every spiritual leader is that if his followers adhere to the principles enunciated by them and tread the path laid down, they would automatically get the salvation as a fruit of their actions. Not that one may go on performing any evil action and once the Guru is pleased with him, without correcting his behaviour towards life, he would exempt him from the bitter fruits of the evil actions he has already performed.

Correct idea

B—Fraternity

We started with the assumption that the basic Sikh philosophy could conveniently be summed up in two words: 'Unity and Fraternity.' We have already discussed the first

word 'Unity' in detail, wherein after discussing Unity of God, we explained the methods to obtain Him, and the Guru's help in it. We have also discussed the fate of transmigration which awaits those who do not seek salvation and union with God. Now we may discuss the next point, i. e. Fraternity, or the 'Universal Brotherhood.'

Necessary
outcome

This point in fact, does not require much of discussion, as Bhai Jodh Singh writes: "Brotherhood of man is the necessary outcome of the Unity of Godhood¹." "There is one Father," says Guru Nanak, "and we are children of One." There should therefore be no difference between one child of a father and the other. Even if one of them is rich, and the other a poor, one of them is of white complexion and the other of black, they are all the children of one Father, and hence brothers to one another. As the Guru again writes: "The Allah first created light. All are the creatures of the same nature. Every being proceeded from that light, whether one is high or low."

ਅਵਲ ਅਲਹ ਨੂਰ ਓਪਾਇਆ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਬਦੇ ।

ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਜਗ ਓਪਜਿਆ ਕਉਨ ਭਲੇ ਕਉਨ ਮੰਦੇ ।

Special
significance

Bannerji's
view

The principle of 'Universal Brotherhood' had not been enunciated for the first time by Guru Nanak. It had been preached by other spiritual leaders, but in Sikhism it came to acquire a very special significance. Dr. Bannerji has taken considerable pains to explain that the principle of brotherhood enunciated by Guru Nanak, came to acquire special meanings in the hands of his successors, and became more and more communal in its import and limited in its application. He forwards several arguments in this connection. Thus he quotes Guru Ram Das's utterances, such as "God himself is the protector of the true Guru and will save all who follow him;" and :

"To those who obey the will of the Guru, I am ever a sacrifice;

I am ever a sacrifice to those who have served the Guru."

1. Some Studies in Sikhism, p. 14.

And implies that such utterances established position of the Sikhs distinct from that of the common mass of people because according to the above quoted verses, God will protect those alone who follow the Sikh Guru. And thus he says the "love of mankind was narrowed down to love of the followers of Nanak." And further he adds : "Guru Ram Das says, the Guru is Sikh and the Sikh who practices the Guru's word is at one with the Guru and Bhai Gurdas asserts again and again that the Guru is the Sikh and the Sikh is the Guru, there is no difference between them." And he concludes from such writings that the individual Sikh was further exalted to a position almost equal to that of the Guru himself." A special status was given to the Sikhs, and they became communal in its application, and thus in their belief of 'Universal Brotherhood.'¹

Brother-
hood
narrowed

With due deference to Dr. Bannerji's intellectual eminence, we are, however, astonished at the way he has dabbled with the material available with his unavailing effort to prove that the successors of Guru Nanak limited his principle of 'Universal Brotherhood' to a communal brotherhood among the Sikhs alone. There are in fact numerous verses composed by Guru Nanak's successors which can be very easily compared to the one of Guru Nanak wherein he says that the God first created light and from light proceeded every being ; to prove that they did not deviate from the original principle of 'Universal Brotherhood' laid down by Guru Nanak. Guru Ram Das himself thus says at one place that : "Everyone belongeth to Thee ; Thou art every one's ; Thou art the capital stock of all"².

It is wrong

What Dr. Bannerji has failed here to understand is that when the Guru says that Guru is the Sikh and the Sikh is the Guru, he does not here mean to imply that every person who became the Guru's follower was that Sikh between whom and the Guru there was no difference. The Sikh here in fact is

His
mistake

1. See Evolution of The Khalsa, Vol. I, Chapter VI.

2. Macauliffe, ii, p. 289.

Correct
position

taken to mean a perfect disciple, a true Sikh who has left off the earthly cravings and surrendered himself to the Guru. And when a person becomes a true Sikh, he becomes a saint of God, even with the Guru, and is equal to any saint of this status of whatsoever sect or creed he might be. Guru Ram Das for instance writes at one place :

All
respected

*"I meditate on God's excellence and name,
And in company with the saints I cause His name to dwell
in my heart."*

*"Blessings on those men of God who know Him.
I shall go and ask them to tell me of God!"*

And again he writes :

*"They who never forget God are perfect and distinguished.
They obtain the true Guru from the merciful one and fix
their thoughts on him night and day"*

Sikh is
saint

In all the above-quoted verses no mention of the word Sikh is made, and the Guru says that those "who never forget God," or "Those men of God who know Him" are the persons whose society he would seek. Here no mention is made that these persons must be the followers of the Sikh Guru and it would be foolish to try to construe these meanings. That when the Guru says that there is no difference between Guru and a Sikh, he means by Sikh here only a true saint of God and not a common follower of the Guru who might profess to follow him and bow before him, is further proved from the following hymn :

Apostates
condemned

*"The apostates go and bow to the Guru," but their hearts
are base and filled with flasehood.*

*When the Guru saith to them 'Rise and work, my
brethren', they go and squeeze themselves in some-
where like cranes.*

*The true Guru abideth among his disciples ; he picketh
out and expelleth the monkeys.³"*

Moreover when Guru Ramdas said : "To those who

1. Macauliffe, ii p. 290.

2. Ibid, p. 308

3. Ibid, p. 307

obey the will of the Guru, I am ever a sacrifice," he did not mean here to magnify his own self and respect only those who respected him, thus distinguishing such persons into a separate brotherhood. Guru of the Sikhs is something impersonal and abstract, as Dr. Bannerji himself agrees. Guru of the Sikhs is the message concerning God, or the 'Word', and not the one who utters the 'Word', and whosoever obeys this 'Word,' has the Guru as his sacrifice. The Guru is a sacrifice, again, not only to those who follow the 'Word' uttered by him alone, he is a sacrifice to all those who do not forget God, as is obvious from the above-quoted verses. It is thus clear that the 'Universal Brotherhood' preached by Guru Nanak was in no way limited by his successors to a communal brotherhood among the Sikhs themselves, as Dr. Bannerji tries to prove.

Guru,
Word,
God

Not
limited

Still, however, with the passage of time, brotherhood among the Sikhs did come to acquire a special meaning, and this came to be done not as a result of some changed approach of the Sikh Gurus to the subject, it happened rather as a result of the peculiar circumstances to which they were subjected. When their Gurus were persecuted, and subjected to harassment, they developed some sort of special social affiliation among themselves, as any community in such circumstances would do. And this resulted in the development of the Sikh commonwealth principle. But here again, at least in the time of the Sikh Gurus, they fought more for others than for their own selves, and they fought more to bring home in the minds of the authorities, the idea of 'Universal Brotherhood' and oneness between the Hindus and the Muslims than for their own communal brotherhood. It is only later after the death of Banda Bahadur that the Sikhs became self-seekers, and the original principles of the 'Universal Brotherhood' were forgotten. But here again, and even in the time of Ranjit Singh, the policy of toleration towards others was kept as the highest principle of the Sikh scheme of life.

Still special
meaning

We here, however, are concerned with what Guru Nanak

Nanak's
philosophy

Estimate

himself preached and what his followers propounded, and we may quote Sir Charles Gough in this connection. Guru Nanak, he says, "penetrated beneath the crust of observances and conventions and found the root of the matter in the Unity of God and equality of men before him". And as M'Gregor writes : "The precepts of Nanak were those of peace with all mankind."² According to Griffin : "There is much in the character and teaching of Nanak which reminds the student of the life and teaching of the greatest Buddhist reformer, whose devotion to the cause of humanity and the general enlightenment of whose doctrine have had so vast an influence on a quarter of the human race"³.

C—The Moral Duties.

Trump's
absurdity

In the end we might here give a few references regarding moral duties in the Sikh religion, to prove the absurdity of Dr. Trump's observation that "in a religion where highest object of life is the extinction of individual existence, there can be no room for a system of moral duties." Regarding the virtuous it is said thus :

*"Day and night should I remain happy,
If I could get the dust of the feet of the virtuous,"⁴*

Regarding Truth :

*Truth is higher than everything,
But higher than truth is true living.⁵*

Silence :

*"Where speech fails,
It is better to be silent."⁶*

Passions :

"Call him a perfect fool,

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1. The Sikhs and Sikh Wars.
 2. M'Gregor, History of the Sikhs, Vol. I, p. 35.
 3. Griffin, Ranjit Singh, p. 52.
 4. Rag Asa.
 5. Sri Rag.
 6. Majh Rag.

*Who has enslaved himself to passions, greed, lust and pride."*¹

Gambling :

*"Gambling is all in vain."*²

Stealing :

*"Nanak, what rightly belongs to others,
Is forbidden as pork to a Muslim and beef to a Hindu."*³

Intoxication :

*"By drinking liquor,
One puts himself to much misery."*⁴

Regarding the falling status of women in society :

*"Why call her an evil,
Who gives birth to kings and greatmen ?*

And regarding Prostitutes :

*"The prostitute sins without compunction
She commits adultery without shame."*⁵

Encouragement of widow-marriage, condemnation of *Sati* were all done by the Sikh Gurus. They preached simplicity of life, early rising, meditation on Name and honest living :

*"Rise early before the day breaks,
And meditate on the glory of the true Name."*

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1. Majh Rag.
 2. Gauri Rag.
 3. Majh Rag.
 4. Bilawal Rag.
 5. Bhairi Rag.

CHAPTER V

GURU NANAK

A CHARACTER ESTIMATE

Revolutionary or a Reformer ?

A—Revolutionary or reformer

End and means

Bannerji's mistake

Much has been said and written regarding whether Guru Nanak was a revolutionary or a mere reformer. Dr. Bannerji, the author of 'The Evolution of the Khalsa' has laboured very hard to prove that whatever Guru Nanak said and did against the established institutions of the Hindu or the Mahomedan society "has to be taken more as a criticism than as a constructive pronouncement, as an assertion more negative than positive in its import." We admit that it has made in our mind a complete mess of 'means' and 'end', when Dr. Bannerji tries to distinguish between them in this connection by saying that the "Guru was never tired of exposing the futility of mere forms and names without the essentials implied therein." What Dr. Bannerji means to say is that Guru Nanak agreed with the Hindus that their Vedas were venerable and beneficial, but he disagreed with them as to how to draw benefit from them. Guru Nanak agreed with the Hindus that their divinities such as Rama and Krishna were to be praised, but he disagreed on their methods in the fact that the Hindus regarded them as creators and not as created. That is, in their "end" the Guru agreed with them, but on the "means" they adopted to achieve that end, he disagreed. Up to this point we have no dispute with Dr. Bannerji. But our utter astonishment arises when he tries to conclude from the above that, "there is no satisfactory evidence to show that he (Guru Nanak) intended to overturn the social order." The serious mistake Dr. Bannerji seems to have committed is that he has based the Hindu social order

on the above mentioned "end" rather than basing on "means." He has completely failed to perceive that the Hindu society in its peculiar set up, has always been distinguished from its religious practices, or means and not from its religious aim or end. Aim of the most noble of the Hindu scriptures has been common with the aim of the Christian bible, and to that extent with that of the Quran; because they all believe in the essence i.e. the Unity of God. Where the Hindus differ from them is on the "means", or the practices through which that religious aim or "end" can be obtained, and this in its peculiar set up, determines the Hindu social order. Clearly thus, if Guru Nanak wanted to attack the Hindu social order, he had to attack the "means", and not the "end" in which he had no difference. And Dr. Bannerji is completely wrong in assuming that since he did not attack the "end", there was nothing to "show that he intended to overturn the social order."¹

Nanak did
attack
social order

Dr. Bannerji has discussed Guru Nanak's attitude towards the existing Hindu caste system at length and has very confidently concluded that "there is no solid ground to contend that Guru Nanak had attempted the abolition of the caste-system." He quotes Guru Nanak's observations on the sacred Hindu thread (*janeu*), and some verses regarding kitchen from Rag Asa as follows:

Caste

"Out of the cotton of mercy make threads of temperance, and twisting them with Righteous zeal tie in them the knot of continence.

And:

"There is only one kitchen of the Lord and none other.

No other kitchen can work, nor can it remain long in the world."

And argues that if in the second case the Guru was not condemning the setting up of kitchens, and was simply praising the Lord in his characteristic manner, it could never be said that he condemned the wearing of the sacred

thread in the first case and thereby tried to destroy the caste institution. Dr. Bannerji, however, does not fail in quoting some more verses where the Guru's attitude towards this institution is more manifest. Thus :

*"Castes are folly, names are folly :
All creatures have one shelter, that of God."*

And again :

"Caste hath no power in the next world, there is a new order of beings.

They whose accounts are honoured are the good."

Caste-pride
and caste

But here, quoting some more verses which hardly fit, in the manner he has quoted them, he concludes that, "it seems essential that we should recognise a distinction between caste and caste pride. The Guru had no mercy for the latter." And again he says : The Guru "used his lash vigorously on the pride of caste and the pride of name but his remarks hardly entitle us to conclude that he wanted a total destruction of the entire social system." Here again it seems utterly difficult to follow Dr. Bannerji's argument. We do not understand how one can distinguish between caste and caste-pride and say that if the caste pride is removed, the caste still continues. It hardly needs be said that it is caste-pride which forbids a man of higher caste to intermarry with the family of a lower caste, howsoever high economic status that family might possess. Again it is the caste-pride which forbids them from eating together and living together. If the caste pride is removed and the high and the low castes intermarry with each other, eat together and live together, where shall the caste itself remain ? It is absurd thus to assert that when Guru Nanak censured caste-pride, it amounted to no censure against the institution of caste itself.

Wrong
distinction

He forwards more arguments and quotes *Suraj Prakash* in one saying that on one occasion Guru Gobind Singh asked for some thread to tie up his sword-belt. Daya Singh the first of the Guru's disciples under the new system of initiation by

Daya
Singh's

Pahul, was present there and he at once tore off his *janeu* and offered it to the Guru. And Dr. Bannerji finds in it a support for his assertions that, "there is no solid ground to contend that Guru Nanak had attempted the abolition of the caste-system," because had he done that, the Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh should definitely not have continued wearing the *janeu* even under his new system. We do not know whether *Suraj Parkash* is correct in this respect or not; and even if it is correct, we do not know to what exact significance did Daya Singh continue wearing the *janeu*. But the one point over which we may express an extreme surprise is that Dr. Bannerji has been completely callous in refusing to remember here the fact that in Guru Gobind Singh's new system atleast, the caste distinctions had been completely abolished; and the persons from the lowest castes of nail-cutters, sweepers and weavers were amongst his first initiates; at whose hands every Sikh of the Guru to howsoever high caste he might have belonged, craved to have something to eat or drink. A more violent censure or an attack against the caste institution one could never think of; and if even under these circumstances the persons like Daya Singh continued wearing a *janeu*, we refuse to agree that the *janeu* here should have been a representative of the cursed institution. What Dr. Bannerji seems to have done is that he has adopted one line of discussion, and without sifting the facts against his position, he has woven a fabric of arguments, which is so beautiful and attractive from outside, yet, from inside, it is fallacious and simply obtrusive.

Janeu

Callousness

Obtrusive arguments

Seeds of revolution

We have no intention to prove that Guru Nanak was a revolutionary, who wanted to destroy with one stroke of pen, all the cherished institutions of old Hindu society. Yet we have no hesitation in saying that Guru Nanak's methods and practices were much different from those of the other exponents of the Bhakti Movement. And if the Guru was actually not a revolutionary, *he did sow the seeds of a revolution.*

While we may not agree with Dr. Narang that

1. More violent

the religious movements that preceded Nanak, "were more or less, all sectarian, ritualistic, narrow-minded and bigoted;"¹ because Kabir and Ramanand had preceded the Guru and their verses were included in the *Adi Granth*. Yet there is no doubt that the Guru was more violent against the existing social evils than even Kabir and Ramanand had been, and he was more constructive than them, in this respect, as we shall presently see.

2. More practical

Further, we may not agree with Dr. G. C. Narang that with the exception of Vallabhacharya, all the preceding Bhakti reformers were of other-worldly character, were convinced of the nothingness of this world, and were in favour of renouncing it instead of living as householder's life; because Nityananda, for instance, who was one of the principle propagators of Chaitanya's teachings, did marry late in life and settle down as a householder. Yet we must agree with Cunningham regarding the other Bhakti reformers that "they perfected the form of dissent rather than planted the germs of nations and their sects remain to this day as they left them." It was, as he adds, reserved for Guru Nanak to perceive the true principles of reform and thus to lay the foundations on which Guru Gobind Singh erected a nation.² Guru Nanak was more practical than others, because he refused to appoint Sri Chand, his eldest son, as his successor, as he was of other worldly character, and Guru Nanak required a successor who could carry on his mission as a householder.

Sri Chand rejected

3. Non-sectarian

It may not be believed that Guru Nanak alone was non-sectarian who sought to strip religion of mythology; because persons like Kabir also did it before him; yet in his preachings and practices, Guru Nanak was more emphatic than any one else had been.

4. Caste condemned

Guru Nanak did not utter only a few words in a mild form, against the existing institution of caste, as Dr. Bannerji would like us to have it. He rather condemned it most emphatically, as in *Var Sarang* :

1. Transformation of Sikhism.
2. History of the Sikhs.

ਫਕਤ ਜਾਤੀ ਫਕਤ ਨਾਉ ।

ਸਭਨਾ ਜੀਆ ਇਕਾ ਛਾਉ ।

Not only that, he took certain solid steps, to see that the caste institution was really uprooted, and of which the other Bhakti reformers could never think. His foundation of the institution of *langar*, or community kitchen at Kartarpur, of which we will have more opportunities to speak in the following chapters, was a step towards this direction. Whereas on the one hand the *langar* was proposed to be a refuge for poor and the destitute, on the other hand it was to work as an effective machinery to level up the society. Here all the Sikhs of the Guru and visitors to him had to sit squatting together, and eat together, whether they belonged to one caste or the other, or to one community, to one religion or the other. Partaking of food in the kitchen was declared compulsory during the time of Guru Nanak's successors, for those who wanted to see the Guru. And Kings and paupers sat alike to receive the ambrosia. Even Akbar, a mighty Emperor and a Muslim, had to do the same, before he could meet Guru Amar Das in 1565 ; to prove effectively the futility of Dr. Bannerji's point that Guru Nanak did nothing solid against the caste system.

Solid steps

Langar

And again, by founding the city of Kartarpur on the banks of the Ravi, Guru Nanak founded a colony where everybody, rich and high, and poor and lowly, had to do one or the other of the manual jobs. The Guru himself ploughed his lands, and reaped his crops, and everybody worked in the kitchen, cleaning the utensils, cooking the food and fetching the water. One could think of no step, more solid and more emphatic, to bring the people of the different castes together. The *langer* gave an opening to the Sikh charities, and together with this colony of the God-fearing men, gave an opportunity to the Sikhs to develop closer social contacts ; and thus, intentionally or unintentionally, worked as a seed for the future Sikh nation, and thus for a revolution.

Kartarpur

Sangat System

5. Sangat
system

Advantage

Network

Prominent
Sikhs

Another step of the Guru which worked as a seed of revolution was his organisation of the *Sangat* System, *Satsang* or an assembly of holy men. It had, as we have already referred to, manifold advantage. As the Guru remarked: "The advantages of assembling together I cannot enumerate." The company of holy men, besides being an aid in the ripening of one's spiritual thoughts, helps one in the social and organisational field as well. As Dr. Ganda Singh writes, Guru Nanak "felt that the real cause of the misery of the people was their disunity born of diversity of belief."¹ Therefore, wherever Guru Nanak went, he left behind him a *Sangat*, or an association of his followers, with the instruction that they should build a *gurdwara* of their own, where they should meet regularly and sing the hymns. As a result of his travels into different parts of the country, and as a result of the activities of his successors, there sprang up all over the country, a network of temples and centres of Sikh missionary activities. Such centres were established also in Kamrup (Assam), Behar, Cuttock, Surat, Johar (Sbathu), Nanakmata in the Kumaon Hills, Khatmandu, Junagarh, Jallalabad, Kabul, Persian Gulf and at many other places. Although most of the incumbents of these centres are not very much conversant with the Sikh thought and scripture, yet many of the centres still exist intact, despite a long isolation. Some *Sangats* seem to have been founded in the time of Guru Teg Bahadur, in Colombo, Rameswaram, Madras, Satur, Kanjiliban, Adilabad in Hyderabad (Deccan), Mirzapur, Chittagong and Dhubri in Assam etc., where some autograph letters of Guru Teg Bahadur and Gobind Singh also exist. Bhai Gurdas in his 11th *Var*, gives a list of some prominent Sikhs in places such as Kabul, Kashmir, Sirhind, Thanesar, Delhi, Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, Ujjain, Burhanpur, Gujrat, Suhand, Lucknow, Jaunpur, Piragraj, Patna, Rajmahal and Dacca. We also get some information regarding the

1. The Sikh People, p. 10.

Sikh *Sangats* and temples in the Southern India and Ceylon, from a story regarding a Sikh's travel in the Deccan, called *Hakikat rah Muqam*, in an old manuscript copy of the Holy Granth written in 1675. The city of Benaras was known in the time of Guru Gobind Singh as the "garrison of the Guru," as it is referred to in an autograph letter of his wife, Mata Sahib Deva, still preserved in a Sikh *gurdwara* at Benaras.

A travel

A garrison

Each of these *Sangats* was placed in the charge of a leader whose duty it was to preach the religion of Guru Nanak and to remain in contact with the Guru in the centre. Thus different Sikhs were appointed to preach the Sikh philosophy in the different parts of the country. Bhai Lallo preached in the north, while Sheikh Sajjan in the south-west of the Punjab. At Benaras the preaching-in-charge was Gopal Das, in Kiratpur Budhan Shah, in Bushahir Jhanda Badi, in Mahisar Mahi, in Jagannath Puri Kaljug, Salis Rai in Patna and Behar, Raja Shivnath in Ceylon and Devlut in Lushai (Tibet).

The
incharge

As the Guru's presence in the Punjab became a constant necessity, the missionary activities in the far lying places slackened. Guru Amar Das re-organised them under the name *Manji* system, and in the time of Guru Arjan, they were organised into a *Masand* system, as it will be discussed in the subsequent chapters relating to these Gurus.

Manji

Masand

As the time passed, these Sikh *Sangats* or congregations gathered greater and greater sanctity, till the Guru and the *Sangat* were merged into each other. Bhai Gurdas wrote for instance: "Where there is a single Sikh he is one; the two form a holy association; while where three or five collect together, there is God himself." Guru Ram Das declared: "The Guru himself is a Sikh, and a Sikh who repeats the Word given by the Guru, is at one with the Guru." It was to respect the wishes of the Sikhs of Delhi that Guru Arjan refused the hand of Chandu's daughter for his son Hargobind, thus entailing upon himself a lot of trouble and sacrifice. When Guru Gobind Singh baptised the first five Sikhs, he stood in suppliant attitude to be himself baptised at their hands; and

Sanctity

Guru
inferior

later on promised that wherever five of the true Sikhs came together, there he himself would be present. The proverbial 'five' were vested with such high authority that the Guru himself was considered to be inferior in status to them. Thus once when to test the discernment of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh lowered his arrow in salute before the tomb of a saint, he had to pay a fine of Rs. 125. And at Machhiwara, being threatened by an attack of a surging mass of Mughal army, it was under the order of the 'Five' Sikhs—the *Panjpiyara*s, that the Guru had to escape under the cover of a night.

Gurmata

Part played

After the death of Banda Bahadur, the Sikhs were organised into a body known as *Gurmata* which was dissolved in 1805 in the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The part the *Gurmata* and the misl-organisation played in giving a death blow to the tottering Mughal empire, in damming the flood of Duranis' invasion across the Indus, and in clearing the way for the establishment of the Sikh rule, will be a subject of our subsequent discussions.

The bene-
fits

History
changed

It is clear, thus, that the step taken by Guru Nanak in establishing *Sangats* at different places was very potent of its significance. In its spiritual sense, it helped the Sikhs in maturing their beliefs on the lines laid down by the Guru; in its social sense it gave opportunity to the people of all castes and creeds to meet together and sit together as equals; and in its political sense it developed among the Sikhs, strong democratic traditions¹, and gave to the Sikhs the basic units of their political organisation. If we consider the part that the system founded by Guru Nanak played in the history of the Sikhs and in that of the Punjab, we will have to agree that the Guru's action was nothing short of a seed of a great revolution, which changed the very face of this country's history. No body can say what the Abdalis should have done, if the flood of their invasions had not been rolled back by the Sikhs into their own country. But for this, the subsequent history of India should have been different from

1. This will be discussed in detail in the Constitution of *Gurmata*.

what actually it has been.

Guru Nanak left his teachings in the shape of verses, and thus under the lock of poetic metres, making it well nigh impossible for anyone to adulterate them with spurious insertions. This also laid down the foundation of a separate Sikh scripture which was later compiled by Guru Arjan, and which helped the Sikhs in establishing their separate entity. Moreover by preaching in easy language, he made it possible for his message to reach far and wide, and his language later became the language of the Sikhs.

6. Teachings in verses

7. Easy language

"The hour of Guru Nanak's birth, "was an hour of crisis for the calmly flowing stream of the Indian culture which had never been subjected to such a severe stress and storm."¹ The political system at the time, as we have already discussed, was a challenge even to the basic self-respect of man. Guru Nanak did not prove himself in such circumstances to be a mere hermit. He openly declared against the tyranny of the degenerate Lodhi rulers :

8. Against tyranny

"Kings are butchers, cruelty their Knife."

*Dharma or the sense of duty has taken wings and vanished."*²

And when Babur invaded India, shed a lot of innocent blood and established his rule, the Guru declared in his poignant verses :

"When Babar's rule was proclaimed no one could eat his food."

If a powerful person were to attack another powerful person, there shall be no anger in my mind.

But if a ferocious lion falls upon a herd of cattle, the master of the herd should show his manliness."

It was this open condemnation of the prevailing political debauchery which distinguished Guru Nanak from the other *Bhakti* reformers, and prepared the way for the future clash between Mughals and the Sikhs. It was a lesson to the Sikhs

Distinguished

A lesson

1. See article of Sri Roshan Lal Verma, Spokesman, February 8, 1960.

2. Majh ki Var.

that they would not sit down like a recluse and saints closing their eyes towards what was happening in the country. They would rather challenge the evil and sacrifice their lives like Guru Teg Bahadur and Bhai Mati Das, to eradicate it. Such utterances of the Guru added political element to the Sikh character, which developed slowly, but surely, into a separate *raj* of their own, however unconscious of it—the Sikh Gurus themselves might have been.

In fact, says Dr. G. C. Narang, “after centuries of subjection, Nanak was the first among the Hindus to raise the voice against tyranny and oppression.” This voice later developed into challenge between the Mughals and Guru Hargobind and yet later between Mughals and Guru Gobind Singh which changed the Sikhs into Singhs, a nation of lions, the Khalsa.

Sikhs to
Singhs

9. Soil and
people

And again, Guru Nanak preached his message on a soil and among the people who were bound to have their effect upon the flow and the character of the Guru's philosophy itself. Just as Buddhism changed from its original character when it reached China and Japan, the Bhakti Movement was changed in its character when it travelled from the south to the north into the Punjab, through Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak's conversion of a great mass of the Punjabi Jats, the flower of the country's population, was bound to have a far reaching effect on the subsequent development of the Sikh character. The Jats being a warrior race, they helped in making the Sikhs into a warrior nation.

Warrior
race

10. Conti-
nuity

And then by appointing a successor in Guru Angad, he at once established the possibility of his preachings bearing a better fruit than those of the other Bhakti reformers. The Sikhs were to get the privilege of having a mature spiritual guidance for quite a few generations to come. And they had better possibilities of maturing their character as a distinct nation. Moreover the Guru's appointment of Bhai Lehna as his successor and rejection of his eldest son Sri Chand, a man of other worldly character, was itself a step potent of its significance. It established once for all that the Sikhs

were not going to prove hermits, renouncing the world and going over to the forests and the mountains to obtain God. The Sikhs were rather going to be a religion of house-holders, accepting the challenges of life and trying to live pure amidst impurities.

II. Religion
of house-
holders

Thus it is obvious that even if we agree that Guru Nanak was not a revolutionary, he was definitely a more violent reformer than other Bhakti leaders and he did lay the foundations of a revolution, which was completed by the time of Guru Gobind Singh.

Revolution
founded

Guru Nanak was born great. Although we do get references in the *Janamsakhis* that he was sent to a Persian and to a Hindi school for education when he was a child, we do not get any evidence from anywhere that he remained in any school for some considerable time. Yet his poetry breaths of high knowledge of the most learned and versed in mythology, philology, science and arts. Dr. G. C. Narang thus writes : "He did not teach anything new, but whatever he said bore the impress of originality, and displayed the genius of a master mind.....he did not quote Manu and Vyasa or the Koran and Hadis, but whenever he argued a point, his practical wisdom and strong common sense always prevailed over the logic and theology of his opponents."¹

B—Born
great

He was great as a poet. As Khushwant Singh writes : "He was the first to give the rustic language of the Punjab a literary form and finish."² He developed this language and introduced new elements into it. His main themes were ethics and supernatural philosophy, yet his methods were so simple, easy and attractive that no person with a sense of beauty could help appreciating them. He expresses his separation from God in the same way as if one is separated from her sweet-heart. When there is Besant and the beauty of the nature is at its climax, the butter-flies embrace the honeyed flowers, and everything is in the joyous mood, a woman gets

C—A great
poet

Language
Themes

A simily

1. Transformation of Sikhism.

2. Spokesman, Nov. 1957, Guru Nanak Number.

happiness only when her spouse is by her side. He says :

ਚੇਤ ਬਸੰਤ ਭਲਾ, ਭਵਰ ਸੁਹਾਵੜੇ ।
ਬੋਨ ਫੁਲੇ ਮੰਝ ਧਾਰਿ, ਮੈ ਪਿਰੁ ਘਰ ਬਾਹੁੜੇ ।
ਪਿਰ ਘਰਿ ਨਈ ਆਵੇ, ਧਨ ਕਿਉਂ ਸੁਖ ਪਾਵੇ,
ਬਿਰਹਿ ਬਿਰੋਧ ਤਨ ਛੀਜੇ ।
ਕੋਕਿਲ ਅੰਬਿ ਸੁਹਾਵੀ ਬੋਲੇ, ਕਿਉਂ ਦੁਖ ਅੰਕ ਸਹੀਜੇ ।
ਭਵਰ ਭਵੇਤਾ ਫੁਲੀ ਡਾਲੀ, ਕਿਉਂ ਜੀਵਾ ਮਰ ਜਾਏ ।
ਨਾਨਕ ਚੇਤ ਸਹਿਜ ਸੁਖ ਪਾਵੇ, ਜੇ ਹਰਿ ਵਰ ਘਰਿ ਧਨ ਪਾਏ ।

Beauty and
nature

His high sense of beauty and observation can be perceived when he compares sun and moon to lamps of God ; and firmament, stars and wind are all pressed into His service.

He says :

"The sun and moon, O Lord, are Thy lamps ; the firmament Thy salver ; the orbs of the stars the pearls enchased in it.

*The perfume of the sandal is Thine incense, the wind is Thy fan, all the forests are Thy flowers, O Lord of light"*¹.

The
method

The method of Guru Nanak's composition was ingenious. Whenever he discussed with great theologians, he took notes of dialogues and later converted them into poetry. His manner of writing is effective, and whenever he wants to say something serious, he prepares the mind of his reader for it.

Question

He questions, and when one is in the receptive mood, he himself answers, as :

*"Who has the power to praise His might ?
Who has the measure of His beauty ?
Who....."*

And
answer

In the later verse comes the answer :

*"He cannot be proved for He is uncreated
He is without matter, self-existent
....."*

The types of [verses he used varied, and his similies

1. Macauliffe, i, p. 259.

and metaphors, which will be a part of our discussion in the chapter on the *Adi Granth*, were superb.

Guru Nanak was a strong opponent of imperialism, political, religious, social and economic. How openly he challenged the Lodhi rulers and condemned the invasions of Babur? We have already discussed this. While condemning the destruction brought about by Babur, he did not hesitate in censuring even the Almighty, Who considered Khurasan as his own, but sent Mughals, the messengers of death to India. So much destruction was wrought, but He did not feel pity about it.

D—A strong opponent of imperialism

1—Political

ਖੁਰਾਸਾਨ ਖਸਮਾਨਾ ਕੀਆ ਇੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਡਰਾਇਆ ॥

ਆਪੈ ਦੋਸ ਨ ਦੇਈ ਕਰਤਾ ਜਮੁ ਕਰਿ ਮੁਗਲੁ ਚੜਾਇਆ ॥

ਦੇਤੀ ਮਾਰ ਪਈ ਕੁਰਲਾਣੇ ਤੈ ਕੀ ਦਰਦੁ ਨ ਆਇਆ ॥

He condemned most nakedly and violently the exploitation of the poor, the Hindus as well as the Muslims, by Brahmanism and Mullaism, on the name of God and religion. Thus he says :

2. Religious

“Look at the mockery of religion :

That the man-eaters are offering prayers to God after the Muslim fashion ;

And the butchers are putting on the sacred thread of Hinduism.”

The social imperialism of castes and creeds was condemned by the Guru as emphatically as anything else ; and he said :

3. The social

“We declare it openly that
We neither belong to the so-called high class ;
Nor to the middle or low class
We are but people of God ;
And have taken refuge with Him and Him alone.”

The economic imperialism of the capitalists and the moneyed classes was condemned :

4. Economic

“Many people have become misled because of worship of money ;

And many have become lost and dead through it."

And again :

"My stand is with the lowly,

*What have I to do with the rich and vainly great."*¹

The story of Malik Bhago and Lalo in this connection may not be repeated.

E—A great statesman

Guru Nanak was a great statesman indeed. He saw the world suffering under imperialism of different types, and full of evils. Instead of renouncing it and going over to jungles, he challenged the imperialists, political, religious, social and economic.

F—Prophet of peace and sympathy

Guru Nanak was a great Humanist, and a great Prophet of Peace and Symphy. T. L. Vaswani writes in his characteristic manner:

"Lo ! like a mighty host

Moves the Guru's Brotherhood in God !

Brothers ! We are treading

Where the saints have trod :

We are not divided :

All one body we,

One in hope and vision,

One in faith and charity² !

G—Prophet of sweetness and Humility

The Guru was a great Prophet of Sweetness and Humility. Bhagat Singh writes : "Cardinal Newmann, in describing the traits of gentleman, gave the most prominent place to two virtues—of sweetness and humility. Precisely these were two twin virtues, which Guru Nanak, not only preached in his great utterances, but also practised in personal life, and that, to such an extent that one can most befittingly call him a *Prophet of Sweetness and Humility*." Thus did the Guru say :

"Unsweat and sour words,

Impair one's body and mind,

1. Harnam Das, Spokesman, Nov. 1957. Guru Nanak Number.

2. Spokesman, Guru Nanak Number, 1955.

*A sour-tongued person suffereth in calling and repute,
He loseth worldly esteem,*

Nay a fool is he ; fit for chastisement."

And regarding humility the Guru says :

"I am the lowest amongst the lowly, as low as one can be

My associates are the lowly ;

And with the great I have nothing to do.

For where the lowly are looked after,

There ! There verily is the gift of thy grace !"

Guru Nanak had a very remarkable and kindly sense of humour, with which he got the people to see the ridiculous without being ridiculed. He understood the psychology of the people and touched it at its tenderest spot. At Hardwar, thus, instead of condemning the people directly, who were throwing water towards the east, so as to reach their ancestors, he began to throw the water towards the west so as to reach his fields at Kartarpur. And when ridiculed, he questioned, if his water could not reach at a distance of about 300 miles, how could their water reach at a distance of thousands of miles ? And thereafter he began his sermon. At Mecca he lay down, with his feet towards K'aba, to draw home his point that God was omnipresent. All this we have already discussed. His sense of humour is displayed in the following of his verses :

H—His
sense of
humour

"When I am quiet, they say I have no knowledge ;

When I speak, I talk too much they assert ;

*When I sit, they say an unwelcome guest hast come to
stay*

*When I depart, they cry he deserted his family and ran
away.*

When I bow, they say of fear does he pray.

Nothing can I do that in peace may I live.

Preserve thy servant's honour

O Lord sublime, here and hereafter.

I—Master-Musician

Guru Nanak was a master-musician, who is supposed to have invented the *Rabab*. He sang his compositions in *Ragas* or melodies, and is said to be the first man who preached his message in musical measures. We have instances such as that of Sajjan Thag, where men were converted merely under the influence of his touching melody. In the *Adi Granth* the Guru is shown to have used as many as 31 *Ragas*, but he is said to have known almost all of them. And this in itself was a great attainment of the Guru. To-day *Kirtan* or the singing of the Gurus' hymns is an essential part of Sikh congregations, and the ball was set rolling by Guru Nanak himself.

J—Great traveller

A great traveller and an adventurer, he went on foot throughout the length and breadth of India ; which he is first to have called Hindustan in his compositions. In his 25 years of wanderings, he traversed the whole of India and a large part of Asia, reaching Baghdad and Mecca. And wherever he moved, he did so without a single copper in his pocket.

K—Language-maker

"As a language-maker, he occupies a unique place and it is a marvel how he fashioned countless words of superb beauty and melody whose kinship with simple Punjabi words is self-evident".

House holder

A multifaced genius. The most learned man of his time. God's own inspired poet, with God-intoxicated, God-immersed and God-filled, poetry of alluring lilt and rhythm, grace of style and beauty of diction. A master-musician, a great philosopher, and a great saint. Yet Guru Nanak was a great householder, who did not forget the duties of a family life. He married and brought up a family. He loved Bibi Nanki as a brother loves his sister. He loved his sons as a father loves his children. Yet he did not permit the family attachments to interfere into his mission, and impair his sense for merit and impartiality. Sri Chand was his eldest son, but Lehna with whom he had no family affiliation, was a man of merit. The Guru preferred merit to the family tie, and handed over the torch of his mission to the latter and not to the first.

CHAPTER VI

TRANSFORMATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF SIKHISM

A—GURU ANGAD

His Life—I

Bhai Lehna, who later became Guru Angad, was son of a petty trader called Pheru. He was born at the village Harike in the Ferozepur district, on March 31, 1504, and grew up to be a man of religious inclination under the supervision of his mother named Sabhrai. Bhai Lehna married a lady called Khivi, in due time. The lady belonged to Matte-di-Sarai, the ancestral village of, Pheru, who having grown weary of Harike, decided to move back to that village. Soon, however, with Babur's invasion, Matte-di-Sarai was sacked by Mughals and Baloches, and Pheru, along with his family, moved to Khadur, now a famous Sikh town in the district Amritsar. Soon, Pheru died, and the entire burden of the family now fell upon Lehna.

Born 1504

To Khadur

Lehna is said to have been a regular visitor of Jawalamukhi, to which place he used to conduct his family and a company of pilgrims every year. At Khadur, however, once he happened to hear a Sikh of Guru Nanak, called Jodha, who was singing the following hymns of *Asa ki Var* :

Heard a
Sikh

*"Ever remember that Lord by worshipping whom thou shalt
find happiness,*

*Why hast thou done such evil deeds as thou shalt suffer
for ?*

Do absolutely nothing evil ; look well before thee.

*So throw the dice that thou mayest not lose with the
Lord,*

Nay, that thou mayest gain some profit¹."

1. Macauliffe, Vol. II, p. 2.

Awakened

This awakened the emotions of Lehna, and he decided to visit Guru Nanak at Kartarpur, on his way to Jawalamukhi. When, however, he met Guru Nanak he was so much impressed by his teachings that he threw away the bells with which he was to dance before the goddess at Jawalamukhi, and decided to remain with him.

Became
discipleCarried
dripping
grassRepaired
wall

Several stories are told regarding Bhai Lehna's obedience and devotion to the Guru. Once, on the Guru's bidding, Lehna carried a load of wet and dripping grass full of mud from the Guru's fields to his home. His clothes were soiled, and when the Guru's wife asked if it was proper to impose such menial labour on a guest, the Guru replied that there was no mud on Lehna's clothes, it was rather saffron of the court of God. And according to orthodox Sikh accounts, the mud was actually converted into saffron. At another time, when it was heavily raining in a very cold winter night, a part of the wall of the Guru's house fell. When every body else, even the sons of the Guru refused, Lehna got up immediately and repaired it. The Guru, however, professing to be dissatisfied, asked Lehna to demolish it and build once again. Lehna did it, but again the Guru said, it was crooked, and got it razed to the ground. It was built for the third time, and demolished again, and Lehna built it for the fourth time with as keen devotion as ever, and the Guru's sons laughed at him and called him a fool.

Cup
restored

A carcase

The Guru was putting Lehna to trials to test his sincerity and to convince his sons that they were unfit to succeed him. Once while bathing, the cup in his hand slipped and fell into a deep sink. While his sons refused, Lehna put his hand into the dirty water and restored the cup to the Guru. Again, one very cold night, while every one else refused, Lehna washed the Guru's clothes. And his humility went to such an extent that once the Guru asked his sons to eat a human carcase, while they refused, Lehna immediately jumped forward and removed the sheet to find to his astonishment a heap of sweetmeats in place of the carcase.

All such stories told in the Sikh literature may not be true to every word, yet all the authorities are unanimous that Lehna was the very essence of obedience, and his devotion to the Guru was excessive and proverbial. And for this he got the reward, when the Guru appointed him his successor and handed over to him the mission of uplifting the poor, and showing the path to those who had lost it.

Appointed
successor

After Lehna was appointed successor, Guru Nanak directed him to leave Kartarpur, perhaps from the fear of Lehna's persecution at the hands of the Guru's sons, and asked him to move to Khadur. At Khadur, Lehna, who now became Guru Angad, kept himself concealed in a room locked from outside, on the outskirts of the village, known only to a Jat girl, named Nihali, who brought him a cup of milk every day. He remained there for about six months after Guru Nanak's death, till he was discovered through the supernatural knowledge of Bhai Budha. The Guru was perhaps forced to do this to escape from the jealous eyes of his predecessor's family.

Became
Angad

Concealed

After coming out from his seclusion, Guru Angad carried on the mission entrusted to him by his predecessor. Crowds began to visit him and he preached to them the message left by Guru Nanak. The details of his life, however, continue to be legendary. *Jogis* of different sects and penitents often visited the Guru and carried on conversations with him. But to all of them, the Guru preached simplicity of life and abhorrence of supernatural power. Once some superior *Jogis* were so much impressed with his talent that they invited the Guru to ask for some favour. The Guru replied that he desired poverty to continue with him, whereupon the *Jogis* prayed to God that he should be given strength enough to remain humble and continue serving the poor. The purpose of such stories is to show the Guru's determination to continue his strict adherence to the simplicity of his Master's teachings.

Visit of
Jogis

Strict
discipline

In the same disposition seems the story of Humayun's visit to the Guru fitted. It is said, after being defeated by

Humayun's
visit

False pride

Sher Shah Suri, Humayun being obliged to flee from Hindustan, decided to see the wonder-working Guru on his way out. At the time of Humayun's visit, the Guru was in a deep trance and Humayun was kept standing. This enraged him and he tried to draw out his sword to sever the Guru's head. The sword, however, would not come out of the scabbard, which made the fugitive Emperor repentant of his haste ; and the Guru reproached him that the sword which should have been used against Sher Shah, Humayun tried to draw it on the priests of God ; and despite his reverses the Emperor had not been able to win over his false pride. Dr. Bannerji considers the very fact of the Emperor's visit as very doubtful. But there seems to be no reason to disbelieve the story, though we may not give a credit to its details.

Tikke Di
VarSatta and
Balwand

We may relate one more story which is more important for it resulted in the writing of famous Coronation Ode, or the '*Tikke Di Var*,' which throws a flood of light on the early Sikh history. We are told that Guru Angad had two minstrels, Satta and Balwand, who were masters of music, and who used to sing the Sikh hymns in the congregations. They once developed the belief that it was because of their musical skill, rather than any personal quality of the Guru, which attracted crowds to the Guru ; and they decided to stay out for some time, to bring the fact home to the Guru. The Guru sent them messages to come and carry on their duty, but they paid no heed ; with the result that the Guru now decided to do away with their services and declared that whosoever interceded on their behalf, the Guru would have his beard and moustaches removed and with his face blackened, he would be taken round the town mounted on a donkey. Soon after the minstrels realised their folly and they approached every body to request the Guru in their behalf for forgiveness ; but no one was prepared to undergo the punishment the Guru had prescribed for the one who did it. At last, after two months, Bhai Ladha of Lahore, who had a considerable influence with the Guru was approached. Bhai Ladha removed his beard and moustaches and blackening his face mounted a donkey as prescribed in the

Ladha
approached

punishment, and approached the Guru. The Guru was utterly moved, he embraced Bhai Ladha and forgave the minstrels. The minstrels, thus restored, composed the above mentioned Coronation Ode, which depicts the life history, and the activities of the five Gurus, as subsequently completed.

Restored

According to Bhai Santokh Singh¹, however, the Ode was composed in the time of Guru Arjan, and then included in the Adi Granth. Bhai Gurdas also seems to be lending some support to this view, and mentions that Bhai Ladha lived in the time of Guru Arjan. But this view does not seem to be supported by the internal evidence of the composition itself. Possibly Bhai Ladha continued living till Guru Arjan's time. Satta also lived on and should have completed in Guru Arjan's time the Ode begun in the time of Guru Angad.

When composed ?

The Ode mentions how Lehna obeyed Guru Nanak, while the Guru's sons did not, and the result was that Lehna was appointed the successor. It gives details of Guru Angad's devotion, penance, and austerities, and continues the panegyric on the Gurus upto the time of Guru Arjan.

Guru Angad's devotion

The details of Guru Angad's life need not detain us long. Of greater historical significance are his activities which led to the transformation and further consolidation of the Sikh church. A separate note may here be added on this subject.

The Transformation—II

Dr. G. C. Narang writes : "The object of Nanak was simply to leaven the social and religious thought of the Hindus, and to improve the general tone of their moral and spiritual life, and he had never thought of founding a sect, yet he was anxious that his work should continue after his death." And for this purpose, he appointed a successor. Dr. Narang writes again : "Had Nanak died without a successor there would have been no Sikhism to-day or at best simply another Kabirism²". The same view is held by Dr. Trumpp.³

Object of Guru Nanak

Successor, its significance

1. Suraj Prakash, III, xiii-xiv.
2. Transformation of Sikhism, pp. 43-44.
3. See his Adi Granth.

And Dr. I. B. Bannerji writes : "The nomination of Angad to the Guruship is a fact of the profoundest significance in Sikh History.....it was not difficult for Hinduism to accomodate the followers of Nanak within its folds and absorb them toally in time....." If a separate existence for Sikhism as a religion was to be made, "the appointment of Guru Angad to the Guruship was the first great step in that direction.¹ Other steps were taken by the followers of Guru Nanak, but of "The ten Gurus, the second, fourth, fifth, sixth and tenth were chiefly responsible for measures which fostered communal consciousness and welded the Sikhs into an independent community," as Khushwant Singh writes.² The steps taken by Guru Angad will here be considered.

Invention of the Gurmukhi Alphabet

Much has been said regarding the invention of the Gurmukhi alphabet. But it can be conclusively proved that it was not invented in the time of Guru Angad. Thus, for instance, in the *Raga Asa*, in the *Adi Granth*, we come across a *patti* of 35 verses of Guru Nanak, each of which begins with a letter of the alphabet. These letters, writes Ibbetson, "are exactly the same 35, as are now found in the Gurmukhi Alphabet even including the letter (r) which is peculiar to Gurmukhi thus proving that the Gurmukhi Alphabet existed before his time and was not invented by the second Guru—Angad, though the name Gurmukhi may have replaced its original name"³.

Moh. Ali's view

Trumpp's extremity

Ahmad Bin Mohammad Ali writes in his '*Mirat-ul-Ahwal-i-Jahan-numa*' that the alphabet was invented by Guru Nanak, and he is supported by Forester.⁴ Dr. Trumpp, however, goes to the extreme extent of saying that "Guru Angad was altogether unlettered and could himself neither read nor write. The later tradition, which makes him the

1. Evolution of Khalsa, vol. VI.

2. The Sikhs, p. 26.

3. Glossary of Punjab Tribes and Castes, Vol. I, p. 681.

4. See the account of his Journey, Vol. I, p. 68.

inventor of the Gurmukhi letters, is therefore without any foundation.¹"

There is no reason for us, however, to believe that Guru Angad was completely unlettered, as Dr. Trumpp suggests, but still it is clear that he did not invent the alphabet². We might agree with Grierson that *Landa* or clipped true alphabet of the Punjab existed in the time of Guru Nanak, but Guru Angad finding it imperfect in vowel sounds, which were frequently omitted, improved it by borrowing signs from the Devanagiri alphabet and after polishing it named it Gurmukhi.³ Or, as Macauliffe writes : Guru Angad "deeming that the compositions of Guru Nanak were worthy of a special written character of their own, adopted and modified a Punjabi alphabet, called Gurmukhi, to give expression to what fell from the Guru's lips."⁴ The alphabet which Guru Angad modified, it may however be added, was named Gurmukhi by the Guru himself, and it was not known so before this, as Macauliffe suggests.

Grierson's
view

Improved
not inven-
ted

Macauliffe
corrected

After developing a suitable Alphabet, the next step that Guru Angad took was that he wrote a primer in it, as Dr. Leitner writes, the Guru, "like Professor Huxley, did not consider it beneath his dignity to write primers for children, and he accordingly composed a number of mottoes and moral maxims which accompany the letters of the Alphabets."⁵ He also condemned the people openly for their use of the languages other than their mother tongues, as he wrote :

Wrote
Primer

Speak
Mother
tongue

ਘਰਿ ਘਰਿ ਮੀਆ ਸਬਨਾ ਜੀਆ
ਬੋਲੀ ਅਵਰ ਤੁਮਾਰੀ ।

All these steps of the Guru created consequences simply remarkable in the transformation and consolidation of the Sikh Church.

Gurmukhi, the very name of the modified script "re-

1. See his *Adi Granth*.
2. See also Archer, 'The Sikhs,' p. 138.
3. *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. IX, Part I, p. 624.
4. *The Sikh Religion*, Vol. II, p. 56.
5. 'History of Indigenous Education in Punjab.'

Its
importance

mind those who employed it, of their duty towards their Guru, and constantly kept alive in their minds the consciousness that they were something distinct from the common mass of Hinduism,¹ thus writes Dr. Narang.

Payne's
view

And again, as Payne writes : "Prior to the days of Guru Angad the compositions of the saints and reformers were for the most part written in the Sanskrit character..... The Gurmukhi character was well calculated to make its readers part with Hindu compositions written in Sanskrit. The Gurmukhi S is the Sanskrit M, the Gurmukhi M is the Sanskrit Bh, the Gurmukhi W is the Sanskrit D, the Gurmukhi Dh is the Sanskrit P, and the Gurmukhi B is nearly the Sanskrit Gh. When, therefore, one has become accustomed to the use of the Gurmukhi letters, a special and separate effort is required to read Sanskrit, however much one may have been previously acquainted with it. The result has been that in most cases Gurmukhi scholars have parted company with Sanskrit and the multitudinous works in the recondite language."²

Parted
company

New
literates

The development of *Gurmukhi* led to the origin of a new class of literates in the Punjab. Prestige of the Brahmins had been based mainly on their knowledge of Sanskrit. The development of *Gurmukhi*, gave a serious blow to the Brahmanic influence, and there was created the possibility of the preparation of a separate Sikh scripture, together with a new priestly class to replace the Brahmins.

New
possibilities

Hymns
collected

Besides the development of *Gurmukhi*, the Guru took several other steps, which, consciously or unconsciously, led to the transformation of Sikhism. Guru Nanak had written scores of hymns representing the faith he preached. Several of these were said to have been handed over by him to Guru Angad ; while the rest of them lay in the possession of different persons he came in contact with. A foresighted step was taken by Guru Angad, who by collecting them all together, saved them from future interpolation and also laid

1. The Transformation of Sikhism, pp. 46—47.

2. A Short History of the Sikhs, p. 238.

the foundation of the Sikh scripture, which the fifth Sikh Guru compiled.

If we give a credit to the view that Bhai Bala's *Janam-sakhi* or biography of Guru Nanak was prepared in the time of Guru Angad, which is very doubtful as we have already discussed, it was a monumental step which gave to the Sikhs a sacred book to draw inspiration from, just as in the case of Ramayana and Mahabharata for the Hindus. And also, as Dr. Narang writes, these "memoirs compiled by Guru Angad formed the first prose work in the Punjabi language."¹

Guru Angad popularised the system of *langar* or community kitchen yet further. It was a great service to the poor and destitute. Besides, as the *langar* was run with the help of contributions made by the Guru's Sikhs and admirers, it gave a new direction to Sikh charities. Guru Nanak as Dr. Narang writes, "taught the Sikhs the first lesson of contributing money towards a common fund."² The *langar*, where the people of high and low castes all sat together, was also an effective machinery for breaking the caste prejudices of the people and for forging a strong bond of union and love among them. It also concentrated the attention of the Sikhs on their Guru and acted, according to Dr. Bannerji, as a powerful "aid in the propaganda work." It goes to the credit of the Guru, however, that by developing the *langar*, he in no way intended to minimise the dignity of labour and self-dependence. He characterised the offerings for the *langar* as a poison to himself and lived by twisting coarse twine made of *munj*.

Guru Nanak had condemned ascetism and *udas*, as according to Macauliffe, he said in reply to a *Sanyasi* at Dipalpur: "To make use of all things in this world and not deem them one's own, but only God's property, and ever to possess a desire to meet Him is *udas*."³ The merit of living pure amidst the impurities of the world was indeed

Memoirs prepared

Langar, service to poor

Direction to charities

Against caste

Attention on Guru

Propaganda

Poison

Guru Nanak condemned Udas

1. Dr. Narang, op. cit, p. 47.

2. Ibid, p. 48.

3. The Sikh Religion, Vol. I, p. 106.

repeatedly brought forth by the Guru as he wrote : "When man in the midst of desires remaineth free from desires, then O Nanak, he meeteth the one God."¹ Moreover, towards the close of his life, by living the life of a householder in the midst of his family, and by appointing Guru Angad, a man having wife and a family as his successor, the Guru had confirmed it yet further that ascetism had no place in his beliefs. Yet some of his writings caused confusion and yielded meanings which encouraged the *Udasi* sect founded by Sri Chand, the son of Guru Nanak. Thus for instance, Guru Nanak's words : "Wordly love, affection, and dainties, are all blackness and stains,"² and :

*"As herdsmen stay for a short time in the pasture-ground,
so do men stay in this world.*

Men by the exercise of falsehood build houses for themselves.

Awake, awake, ye sleepers; lo ! the soul the dealer departeth.

If ye are to remain here for ever, then build houses.

*The body shall fall and the soul depart, if any one desires to know the truth."*³

There was a possibility in such circumstances that Sikhism of Guru Nanak might relapse into Hinduism, even with Kabirism and other such sects. Guru Angad forestalled it and took steps to clarify Guru Nanak's teachings, and thus helped the Sikhs remain free from the prevailing Hindu practices.

Besides the spiritual awakening, the Guru paid full attention towards the physical development of his Sikhs. He prepared a wrestling ground at Khadur and took an active interest in developing sports among the Sikhs. If the words of Confucious, that 'a journey of a thousand miles is started only with a step,' are to be repeated, the Guru by such interests, laid the foundations of the martial spirit which the

1. Macauliffe, i, p. 173.

2. Macauliffe, Vol. I, op. cit, p. 107.

3. Ibid, p. 117.

Yet
confusion

Steps taken

Physical
training

sixth and the tenth Sikh Gurus infused in the Sikhs and created the Khalsa. The Guru continued the regular and disciplined life of Guru Nanak, of early rising, taking bath ; prayers and physical exercises etc., and all this separated the Sikhs from the common mass of people.

Disciplined
life

The greatest service which Guru Angad, however, rendered to the Sikh church, was his appointment, before he died on March 29, 1552, of a deserving hand as his successor. If the Sikhs were to imbibe completely the teachings of Guru Nanak, and if they were not to fall back into the old and corrupt beliefs and practices of Hinduism, it was very essential that they should have the benefit of mature guidance on the lines laid down by the first Guru, for some considerable time. The continuation of *Guru-Gadi*, was a great step which Guru Angad took towards this direction.

Appointed
successor

CHAPTER VII

TRANSFORMATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF SIKHISM

B—GURU AMAR DAS

His Life—I

Line of
Bharat

King Ram Chandra, the hero of Ramayana, as we know, had Bharat as his half-brother. It is said that Khattris of the Bhalla tribe descended from this brother of Ram Chandra, and Tej Bhan, the father of Guru Amar Das belonged to this line. Tej Bhan's wife Bakht Kaur bore four sons, the eldest being Amar Das, who was born at the village Basarke in April, 1479. Amar Das married a lady named Mansa Devi at the age of about twenty-four, and continued in his father's profession of agriculture-cum-trade.

Born 1479

Pious
Hindu

Amar Das, a devout Hindu, was a zealous follower of the Vaishnav faith, and used to bathe in the Ganges every year. But despite all his practices of a pious Hindu, he could not get solace and pined to get a spiritual teacher who could guide him to the right path. Once, it is said, on his way back from the Ganges, he met a monk with whom he became friendly and intimate. They ate together and after it the monk enquired from him as to who was his Guru. Amar Das replied that he had none so far, where upon that monk in his exasperation exclaimed that he (the monk) had committed a serious sin by taking food from the hands of a man who had no Guru, and that he would have to go back to the Ganges to wash away that sin. And after this the monk departed. This effected Amar Das very seriously, and he became more anxious in his search for a Guru.

Anxious
for Guru

A voice

One morning while he was engaged in his reflections, he heard the voice of some person from his brother's house,

chanting the hymns of Guru Nanak. It was Bibi Amro, the daughter of Guru Angad, recently married to the son of Amar Das's brother, who was singing these hymns. This aroused Amar Das's emotion, and he immediately approached Bibi Amro to enquire as to who was the author of those hymns. She told him that they were composed by Guru Nanak, but that she got them from her father, Guru Angad. Amar Das immediately developed a desire to see Amro's father, and requested her to accompany him. They both proceeded thither, and on reaching the Guru's house, Amar Das fell at Guru Angad's feet, and thereafter began to lead the life of devotion and service to him.

Guru
discovered

The life of strenuous discipline and humble service that Amar Das followed at the feet of Guru Angad, need not be delineated at length. Only one incident may be given to draw home the subject. Amar Das remained at Khadur from 1541 to 1552, i.e. for eleven years. Every day, early in the morning, he would go to the Beas and bring water for the Guru to bathe. Once, in the month of January, 1552, when it was raining and it was very cold outside,—Amar Das set out as usual to bring water, but on his way back his foot struck against a peg of Karir wood and he fell down before the house of a weaver. The weaver's family was sleeping inside, and being disturbed with the noise, the weaver's wife cried : 'Ah, it must be that fool and homeless Amru, who revolves about the feet of that so called Guru.' The news about it reached the Guru who called Amar Das before him and declared that the latter would now no longer be homeless. He would rather be a refuge to the homeless and destitute. He appointed him as his successor, and in the month of March, the same year, the succession ceremony was regularly performed, when Guru Angad declared before the congregation that there would now be no difference between himself and Amar Das, and that they both had become one :

A water-
carrier

And
homeless

Became
Guru

‘ਪੁਨ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਮਹਿ ਕਹਿਤ ਸੁਨਾਈ ।

ਮਮ ਸਰੂਪ ਅਬ ਇਹੈ ਸੁਹਾਈ ।

ਮੇ ਮੇ ਇਸ ਮਹਿ ਭੇਦ ਨਾ ਜਾਨਹੁ ।

ਏਕ ਸਰੂਪ ਦੁਹਨ ਕਉ ਮਾਨਹੁ ।

Dasu and
Datu

After acceding to the pontificate, however, Guru Amar Das was not destined to enjoy a peaceful life. Dasu and Datu, the two sons of Guru Angad claimed that it was their hereditary right to accede to the pontificate after their father's death. While Dasu withdrew his claims as a result of his mother's advice, Datu continued his efforts and declared himself as Guru. Guru Amar Das, who had foreseen such developments, had retired to Goindwal, where the Sikhs continued paying him their respect. Not being satisfied, Datu one day went himself to Goindwal, and calling Guru Amar Das as his family servant, kicked him with his foot in the midst of the congregation. Guru Amar Das, however, kept his patience, and later on left Goindwal as well, and retired to Basarka. Soon, however, his Sikhs and Baba Budha prevailed upon the Guru and he came back to Goindwal to carry on his activities. Some of his activities which kept the torch of the Sikh faith alight, and which separated the Sikhs yet further from the Hindus, may here be described.

Guru
kicked

The Transformation—II

Langar
continued

Guru Amar Das carried on the *langar* started by Guru Nanak. As his minstrel Satta sang in the seventh *pauri* of the Coronation Ode :

"Guru Amar Das obtained the same mark, the same throne, and the same court.

The grandson was as acceptable as the father and grandfather.¹

.....
Ever in thy kitchen, O Amar Das, are clarified butter and flour to eat.

Thou knowest the four quarters of the world ; the Word is dear to thy soul.²

1. "Guru Amar Das was as acceptable as Guru Angad and Guru Nanak. The terms of relationship are figurative."—Macauliffe, Vol. II, op. cit, p. 58.

2. Ibid, pp. 58—59.

The Guru, rather, carried it a step further when he declared that no body, whether high or lowly was to see him before he had partaken of food in the *langar*. No distinction was made in the *langar* between a Hindu and a Muslim, and between a high and low caste. The Sikh accounts go so far as to make Dr. Ganda Singh to say that "even Akbar and the Raja of Haripur had to do the same. All had to sit in line and eat together." It might have been too difficult for Akbar to sit in line, though it may be believed that he partook of the food. This struck a further blow on the caste and creed prejudices, which the Guru was never tired of condemning, as he says :

Step
further

A blow

‘ਜਾਣਹੁ ਜੋਤ ਨ ਪੂਛਹੁ ਜਾਤੀ,
ਆਗੈ ਜਾਤਿ ਨ ਹੋ।’

Besides acting as a levelling influence, the *langar* continued forging a bond of love among the Sikhs, and providing an out let for the Sikh charities.

Hymns of Guru Nanak had been collected by Guru Angad. The latter, together with his own hymns, handed them over to Guru Amar Das, who continued his efforts to collect the first Guru's hymns, and added to the collection those composed by himself. He propounded the same beliefs as his predecessors did, and thus the possibilities of the preparation of a Sikh scripture strengthened. A sample of his hymns may here be quoted.

Collection
of hymns

*“He who through the Guru's instruction obtaineth divine knowledge, discrimination, and intelligence,
Shall sing God's praises and string a garland in his heart.*

He shall be the purest of the pure and possess the highest intelligence.

He who meeteth such a person shall be saved by him.”¹

The influence of the Sikh Guru was developing and his message reached far and wide. There exist many legends regarding the miraculous powers of the Guru under the influence of which the number of votaries of his faith

Manji
system

1. Macauliffe, Vol. II., op. cit, p. 189.

Followers
increased

increased. While we may not accept them in detail, there is no doubt that the number of the followers of the Sikh faith did increase tremendously in Guru Amar Das's time. We hear of several Muslims too having been converted into the Sikh faith. The name of Alyar may here be mentioned.

Manjis and
piris

As the number of the Sikh followers thus increased, it became more difficult to keep them under effective supervision. Guru Amar Das took a great administrative step to solve the problem, and divided his spiritual empire into twenty-two provinces, each called a *Manji*, and each being divided further into smaller sections, called *Piris*. Each of these *Manjis*, bishopries or dioceses was placed in the control of an expert, whose duty it was to preach the Sikh message in his locality and act as a rallying point for the Sikhs. This measure of the third Guru, as Dr. Narang writes, must have gone a long way in strengthening the foundations of the church and in carrying on the propaganda in parts of the country.

The conse-
quences

Political

This step of the Guru, besides carrying the Sikh message far and wide, also gave to the Sikhs an organisation which could later be converted into a revenue producing agency. The charge of one of these *Manjis* was given to a Muslim of Kapurthala, and several of them were placed under the control of women. Such steps of the Guru have led some writers to read political motives in his character, as if the Guru wanted to set up a parrallel political authority against the ruling monarchy. We may not, however, believe that the Guru wanted to do some such thing intentionally, yet there is no doubt that these activities of the Guru did entail political consequences ; when a living contact with the Sikhs was established, through which not only financial necessities of the Gurus were satisfied ; but through which, also, the Sikh propaganda against Muslim tyranny could be carried ; the weapons for battles could be collected and the Sikh recruits into the Guru's forces procured ; as it was done in the times of Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh.

The Guru constructed a *Bawali*, or a well with 84 descending steps at Goindwal, where, by reciting *Japji* on each step, one could escape the eighty-four lakh incarnations. For the Sikhs, now, there was no more a need to go to the Ganges or to the other Hindu places of pilgrimage. They got their own centre and a place of pilgrimage, and this was another great step which helped in separating the Sikhs from the common mass of the Hindus.

Bawali

Sikh place
of pil-
grimage

In connection with the construction of the *Bawali*, an interesting story is told. Once the Guru fell into trance where in he felt the necessity of constructing a *Bawali* where God alone should be worshipped. The work for the *Bawali* was commenced in 1552, and the Guru took personal interest in its execution :

A story

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਖਰੇ ਕਰਾਵਤਿ ਕਾਰ ।

ਸੰਗਤਿ ਕਗਹਿ ਚੋਖ ਚਿਤ ਧਾਰ ।

After digging considerably deep, the Sikhs found a large stone which hindered their progress. The Guru thereupon enquired if there was a Sikh courageous enough, to drive a peg into its base with the object of removing the obstruction. At the same time the Guru warned his hearers that the operation involved great peril. The man who performed it must be able to stem the current which would issue from the aperture formed by the peg ; otherwise he would be drowned. All the Sikhs remained silent, and no one ventured to undertake such a perilous task. At last Manak Chand of Virowal, a young man with a sprouting beard, who was married to a niece of the Guru, declared himself at the Guru's service."

Manak
risked life

Manak Chand entered the pit and extracted the peg, whereupon there issued forth a gush of water which overflowed the *Bawali*, and Manak Chand sank to the bottom. Next morning the lamentations of Manak Chand's widowed mother and his young wife drew the Guru to the *Bawali*, where after hearing the cause of their lamentation, the Guru replied that Manak Chand had not in fact died. The Guru stood by the *Bawali* and called Manak by his name, where-

Drowned

upon Manak's body at once rose to the surface of the water. The Guru touched it with his foot, and Manak walked forth in full life and vigour.¹"

But Guru
saved

Absurd

Absurdity of the story is clear. The motive is to attach supernatural and miraculous powers to the Guru, who used them without a scruple to achieve his ends. Stories of religious leaders are always replete with crowds of such accounts manufactured by their zealous followers, who in their ignorance, commit the crime of dabbling in history, and do thereby a disservice to their professed cause. The Sikh Gurus had always condemned the display of miraculous power, and they themselves could never have committed this folly.

Bawali's
importance

Nevertheless, the story in no way minimises the importance of the construction of *Bawali*, the water of which possessing the healing virtues, the place became an object of visit for crowds of Sikhs.

Akbar's
visit

The Guru had prayed for the success of Akbar in his expedition on Chittor, and Akbar was successful. During one of his periodical visits to Lahore, Akbar made a detour to Goindwal, and accompanied by a large escort, paid a state visit to the Guru. He observed the rule, and before having an interview with the Guru, he is said to have partaken of food from the *langar*. Being pleased with the refuge that the Guru's kitchen afforded to a large number of people, Akbar requested the Guru to ask for the grant of land as he desired. The Guru, however, refused as repeatedly as he was asked. Akbar thereupon granted some villages to Bibi Bhani, the Guru's daughter and subsequently Bhai Budha is said to have been appointed by the Guru to manage the property.

Ate from
kitchen

Rising
prices

This time Akbar lay encamped along with his large escort at Lahore for a long time. As a result of this, the prices at Lahore and in the adjoining areas arose and the peasants suffered. When the next harvest was ready, Akbar prepared to march off, leaving behind a strong possibility of

1. Macauliffe, Vol. II, op. cit. pp. 95—96.

sudden fall in the prices to ruin the peasants. The Guru is said to have sent a request to Akbar who remitted the whole land-tax for the year.

Land-tax
remitted

In connection with the Guru's relations with Akbar, several other stories are told by the Sikh chronicler. It is said that at Goindwal, the Guru did not have a very peaceful time. The city of Goindwal had been founded by a man named Gonda Marwaha, who was a staunch follower of the Guru, and at whose invitation, the Guru had settled there. The activities of the Guru at Goindwal were not looked upon with any sympathy by some Khattris and Brahmins of the place, who made a common cause, and after Gonda's death, incited his son to make a petition to the Emperor against an alleged illegal occupation of some land by the Guru. The Emperor invited the Guru to explain his case personally and favour him with his sight. The Guru, however, excused himself for his old age and sent Jetha to deputise in his behalf. Jetha presented the case effectively, and the petition of the opponents was rejected. After this, the Emperor took Jetha aside and told him to request the Guru to make pilgrimage to the Ganges. He told him that the Guru's activities had administered a blow on the prestige of Brahmins, and some Hindus felt that he wanted to destroy their religion and age old beliefs and practices. The pilgrimage would divert the wrath of the Hindus. The Emperor also promised to issue orders that no Pilgrim's tax should be levied on the Guru's party.

Enemies
combined

Petition
to Akbar

Rejected

A sugges-
tion

The most important authority for the above written account is Suraj Prakash, which was written about three centuries after the Guru's death. Jetha, who later became Guru Ram Das, has left us a contemporary account that the Gonda's son, "The perverse man sent his servant to slander and backbite others, but the result was that the faces of both were blackened."¹ But he nowhere mentions the authority to whom the petition was made, and the whole story of a petition to the Emperor seems therefore to be a

Jetha's
account

1. *Gauri ki Var*, 1.

Concoction concoction on the known acquaintance between the Guru and the Emperor, although it is difficult to understand Dr. Bannerji's arguments against the opponents of the Guru coming together and making a common cause against him.

Bannerji
contradicted

Pilgrimage As to the Guru's pilgrimage to the Ganges, there can be no reason to disbelieve the contemporary account of Jetha, that the "true Guru made the toil of pilgrimage in order to save all people ; and Sikhs travelled with the Guru on his journey."¹ The motive of the pilgrimage introduced by Suraj Prakash and Macauliffe stands condemned. If the Guru was trying to give the Sikhs their own place of pilgrimage at Goindwal, and if the Hindu system of pilgrimage had been condemned right from the time of Guru Nanak, there is no reason for us to believe that Guru Amar Das should have shown the weakness of going to the Ganges to divert the wrath of the Hindus, as mentioned above, though it would be quite understandable if the Guru went himself to such places to preach his teachings and to secure converts, as Guru Nanak himself did.

Motive

Kuru-
kshetra,
Jamna,
Ganges

The Guru, as Jetha writes, first visited Kurukshetra, where "Jogis, Digambers, Sanyasis, and men of the six schools entered into conversation with him." "The Guru thus proceeded to the Jamna where he caused people to repeat God's name." Here the Guru, and all those who professed to be his followers, were exempted from the pilgrim's tax. Jetha continues :

"After he went to the Ganges and there was a marvellous scene.

Tax not
paid

All were entranced on seeing the saintly Guru, and there too no one took half a dam² from him.

No one paid half a dam or put any money into the toll-box ; the toll-collectors' mouths were sealed.

They said, 'Brethren, what shall we do ? Of whom shall we ask ? Every one is escaping under cover of the Guru.'"³

1. *Tukhari Chhant* ; See Macauliffe, Vol. II, pp. 112—114.

2. A coin then current.

3. *Tukhari Chhant* ; See Macauliffe, ii, pp. 112—114.

At Hardwar, Jetha continues, "The leading men of the city went in a body, and took shelter in the true Guru. They asked the true Guru concerning God, and he proved His existence from the Simritis."¹

Leading
men came

Dr. Bannerji, while accepting the story of the Guru's trip as correct, says that the fact that leading men of the city took shelter in the true Guru, "might very well be of the nature of a pious wish."² This, however, seems to be quite an uncalled for conclusion. If the Guru was so important that Akbar could pay him a visit, and if he was so important that many others who truly were not Sikhs, should have escaped the pilgrim's tax simply by taking his name, as he himself agrees, there is no reason for us to believe that the leading men of the city coming to seek spiritual guidance of the Guru, should simply have been a "pious wish" of Jetha, whose account, Bannerji himself says, is sober.

Uncalled
for

Whatever be the details of the incidents, there is no doubt that the Guru's relations with the Emperor must have increased his prestige, and we might agree with Panth Prakash that crowds of new followers came to him. The Guru had won the sympathy of a great number of peasants by getting their land revenue remitted, and they offered him a good number of converts. The fact that a great number of those who were not Sikhs, should have escaped pilgrim's tax, should also have added to his prestige on the one hand, while on the other hand it helped in establishing the fact that the Sikhs occupied a position distinct from that of the Hindus, as the pilgrim's tax realisable from Hindus, was not realised from the Sikhs.

The
benefits

Another step of the Guru was to separate his Sikhs yet further from the *Udasis*. As we have discussed, Guru Nanak's mission had been divided into two parts. While he handed over the pontificate to Guru Angad, his son Sri Chand, founded a new sect called *Udasis*, which progressed

Separation
from Udasis

1. See Macauliffe, ii, p. 114.

2. I. B. Bannerji, 'Evolution of the Khalsa', Vol. I.

with the progress of the Sikhs. The habits of the *Udasis* were more akin to the prevailing Hindu beliefs, and unless some solid steps were taken to distinguish Sikhs from the *Udasis*, the danger of Sikhs being lost in oblivion as a distinct creed still lurked. The Guru realised the danger and declared that the Sikhs must dissociate themselves from the *Udasis*. According to Macauliffe, the Guru sent circulars to the Sikhs to the effect, and actively preached in favour of a householder's life. Macauliffe also relates a story that once a man named Gango enquired from the Guru as to the correct path to salvation. The Guru told him to go and open a shop at Delhi, earn an honest living and give a part of it in charity. Such like activities of the Guru established a character of the Sikhs distinct from that of the *Udasis*, and thus, writes Dr. Narang, "The Sikhs were once for all separated from them, and raised above asceticism, were free and fit to follow their course of national progress."¹

Shop at
Delhi

Separate Social Practices

Hindu
character

Hinduism, as it existed at that time and as it exists to-day, has been more a social organisation than a religious body. People worshipping different gods and goddesses have been able to remain together in the Hindu folds, because of the almost similar social beliefs they have possessed. If, therefore, the Sikhs were to be created as a separate sect from the Hindus, it was very essential that they should be given a separate social structure. Guru Amar Das took certain steps which led to the establishment of different social practices among the Sikhs in due course of time. In taking such steps, the Guru's motive does not seem to have been to wean his followers away from the Hindus purposely, as Macauliffe suggests. His steps were rather religious, which entailed social consequences.

Guru's
steps

Motive

Sikh
gatherings

The Guru proclaimed that the Sikh gatherings should be held on every first day of the months of *Baisakh* and *Magh*, and on the day of *Dewali*. This step of the Guru gave an opportunity to the Sikhs to meet in large numbers,

1. Transformation of Sikhism, p. 33.

at least three times a year, and thus to strengthen the Sikh brotherhood.

Thirty years after the death of Guru Amar Das, his great-grandson, Sundar Das, when requested by Guru Arjan, wrote an account of the instructions which Guru Amar Das left regarding the ceremonies to be performed at the time of his death. Sundar Das was not an eye-witness to the ceremonies actually performed, yet when he wrote out his account, many of the Guru's contemporaries were still living, and the very fact that the account was accepted by Guru Arjan himself, leaves us with no reasonable doubt that the account should be correct. Thus wrote Sunder Das :

Sundar
Das's
account

"Finally, the true Guru spoke, 'After my death sing God's praises.

Death
ceremonies

'Call God instead of a Pandit and, for the Garar Puran, read God's word ;

'Read God's word, hear God's name ; the Guru desireth God's love instead of a lofty bier,

'Barley rolls, bread on leaves, Hindu obsequies, lamps, and throwing his bones into the Ganges.'

The true Guru spoke as it pleased 'God, and he was blended with the Omniscient Being.¹'

Departure

This was a clear departure from the Hindu social practices. There is no doubt that if the Guru desired the Hindu practices to be dispensed with at the time of his own death, he should have suggested them during his life time, to be followed by his Sikhs as well.

The Sikh epithalamium, the *Lawan*, which is said to have been composed by Guru Ram Das at the time of his own marriage, is another departure from the Hindu social practices. This hymn, says Dr. Bannerji, may or may not have been written on the occasion of the Guru's own marriage, "but that hardly affects its significance. It clearly appears that the Guru was commenting on a custom already in existence and we may as well accept the Sikh tradition

Epithala-
mum

1. Macauliffe, ii, pp. 151-153.

that the change had been introduced by his predecessor."

Condemned
Sati

Besides, writes G. B. Scott, Guru Amar Das was the first reformer who condemned the prevailing Hindu practice of *Sati*, and preached against it. In one of his hymns the Guru says that she is not a *Sati* who burns herself on her husband's pyre, in fact she is a true *Sati* who dies afflicted by the grief of her husband's departure.

‘ਸਤੀਆਂ ਇਹ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨ ਜੋ ਮਤੀਆਂ ਲਗ ਜਲਨਿ ।

ਸਤੀਆ ਸੇਈ ਨਾਨਕਾ, ਜੋ ਬਿਰਹਾ ਚੋਟ ਮਰੰਨਿ ।

According to Payne, the Guru "is chiefly remembered for his vigorous crusade against the practice of *Sati*."

Widow

Further, Macauliffe also relates a story which shows that the Guru preached in favour of widow-remarriage. The Guru also condemned *Purdah* system. *Mehma Prakash* relates a story that not caring for the Guru's proclamation against *Purdah*, the queen of the ruler of Haripur visited him in *Purdah*. Spontaneously the words fell from the Guru's mouth, 'why has this mad woman come here?' And actually the woman when she went out, became mad.

Wine

The Guru ordered his Sikhs in forceful words to abstain altogether from wine, as he said :

"One man bringeth the full goblet, another cometh and filleth the cup

The intellect of him who drinketh departeth, and intoxication entereth his brain

He distinguisheth not between mine and thine, and is buffeted by his master.

If possible, drink not at all the false wine,

By which man forgetteth God and receiveth punishment at His court.

Nanak, he who by God's look of favour, meeteth the true Guru, obtaineth the true wine from him.

*Thus shall man ever abide in the joy of the Lord, and obtain a position in His court."*²

1. 'Short History of the Sikhs', p. 31.

2. Macauliffe, ii, p. 215.

Before his death, the Guru appointed Ram Das as his successor, to continue working on the lines laid down by Guru Nanak. The *gaddi* was given on the basis of merit, and this gave the Sikhs a further chance of spiritual guidance and consolidation.

Appointed
successor

Guru Amar Das, writes Latif, "was successful as a teacher, and his zeal and activity in preaching, combined with his genial habits and affable disposition, secured for him many converts to the new faith"¹. Payne calls him a "zealous preacher"²; and according to M'Gregor, he "was a wise and just Guru"³. Dr. Bannerji writes: "The change he desired to introduce in the very important ceremonies connected with marriage and death struck at the very root of the influence of the priestly class and though in such a matter, where long-standing customs and cherished practices were concerned, success must necessarily have been slow, the ball had been set rolling and Sikhism put on the way of gradual consolidation into a separate sect⁴."

Estimate

The pontificate of Guru Amar Das is indeed a turning point in the history of the Sikh church. Guru Nanak had condemned some of the social and religious beliefs obtaining among the Hindus, even with Gautama Budha and Mahavira. But the seeds he sowed, were different from those sown by the latter two. Guru Amar Das's achievement was that he constructed a fence around the plant that germinated, lest it should be destroyed by the gale of all-consuming Hindu social practices. The plant got an opportunity to grow and fructify.

Turning
point

A fence

1. 'History of the Punjab', p. 250.

2. Op. cit. p. 31

3. 'History of the Sikhs', p. 51

4. Evolution of the Khalsa, Vol. I.

CHAPTER VIII

TRANSFORMATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF SIKHISM

C—GURU RAM DAS

His Life—I

Born 1534

Guru Ram Das, whose early name was Jetha, was born in Lahore in October 1534. His father, Hari Das, was a Khatri of the Sodhi tribe, and his mother, Anup Kaur, who was called Daya Kaur after her marriage, was a pious lady given to the life of devotion and prayer. Jetha was given to religious and virtuous activities from his very childhood, and the Sikh records relate that when his poor mother boiled some pulse and asked Jetha to take it to sell it for some profit, the boy took the basket to the river Ravi instead and distributed the pulse to a company of holy men. The story is similar to the one known as *Sucha Soda* told regarding Guru Nanak, but without entering into the merit or demerit of the story, we may believe that Jetha was essentially a God-fearing boy.

Boiled
pulse

Less
legendry

The life of Jetha or Guru Ram Das, as he later became, however, is not full of as many legendary details as the lives of the other Gurus. There seem to be two reasons for this, firstly that his life was not very eventful, and secondly that the Sikh chroniclers have tired themselves by now of manufacturing legends with the result that the difficulty we face now is not of separating facts from legends but the one of discovering facts from comparative darkness. Jetha, when quite young, is said to have fallen in with a company of Sikhs who were singing the Guru's hymns and were proceeding on their way with great rejoicing. On enquiry he learnt that they were going to have the sight of great Guru Amar Das,

who was the third in succession to Baba Nanak, the great philosopher-saint. Being impressed with them and the hymns they sang, Jetha, decided to accompany them. On reaching Goindwal, Jetha, prostrated himself before the Guru, a life of devotion and service to whom, as usual, now commenced. Jetha was a young man of as much exterior beauty as of interior devotion. After some years of Jetha's stay with the Guru, when Bibi Bhani, the younger daughter of the Guru arrived at the age of puberty, the choice fell upon him, and Jetha was married forthwith with her. Some European writers¹, without quoting an authority, relate that Jetha went to Goindwal on some business, where he happened to see Bibi Bhani and the both fell in love with each other at the in first sight. It was to develop this contact that he joined the Guru and began to live a life of devotion to him, resulting his marriage, with the lady of his affections. But judging from the devotional character that Jetha possessed, it seems impossible that Jetha should have started his service to the Guru as a result of his acquaintance with his daughter, while the reverse of it might be probable that after entering into the service, some sort of acquaintance developed between the two resulting in the marriage, in which there was nothing wrong. The Sikh records give us different narrations of the event which we may conveniently ignore.

Guru
discovered

Married
Bibi Bhani

Different
views

Guru Amar Das had two sons Mohri and Mohan, but all agree that Jetha was more obedient to the Guru than either of these two. Jetha commanded in himself a perfect confidence of the Guru. It was he who deputed on behalf of the Guru at the court of Akbar, as we have already discussed in the last chapter. He also accompanied the Guru on a pilgrimage to Hardwar and composed hymns giving an account of the journey. When the construction of the *Bawali* at Goindwal was commenced, here again he served in utter devotion and obedience to the Guru. The result of all this was that Jetha was chosen by the Guru as his successor. Guru Amar Das died at a ripe age and after his death, Jetha

Comman-
ded
confidence

1. See M'Gregor, History of the Sikhs, pp, 51—52.

Appointed
successor

succeeded to the pontificate in 1574, under the name of Guru Ram Das.

The Transformation—II

The
opposition

The 'Sadd' written by Sundar Das reads that after appointing Ram Das Sodhi as his successor, Guru Amar Das ordered his disciples to bow before him. 'The Sadd' continues :

"As the Guru spoke, so his disciples obeyed his wishes.

His son became obedient to him and fell at Ram Das's feet.

Then all fell at the feet of the true Guru into whom Guru Amar Das had infused his spirit."

To Amrit-
sar

Guru Amar
Das
constructed

Or Guru
Arjan ?

This gives us a suggestion that of the two sons of Guru Amar Das, Mohri alone perhaps reconciled himself to the succession of Guru Ram Das. Mohan, the other son, disagreed with it and although his opposition was not insolent as that of Datu to his father, yet Guru Amar Das gave Guru Ram Das the suggestion to shift to the land which had been granted by Akbar to Bibi Bhani, and where, under the orders of Guru Amar Das, the construction of a tank had already commenced, which later grew into the city of Amritsar.

Strong
doubt

It is, however, very much debatable that the construction of the tank of Amritsar commenced in the time of Guru Amar Das as Suraj Prakash believes. The miracle connected with a pool which later formed the tank of nectar, the nucleus around which the city of Amritsar developed, and in which a lame man by taking bath became perfect, is placed by Suraj Prakash itself in the time of Guru Arjan. This would suggest that the tank and the city should have been built only in the time of Guru Arjan. But the fact that the city was previously known as Ramdasapur, raises a strong doubt regarding the authenticity of this account as well.

Forster¹, Ibbetson², Cunningham³, Archer⁴ and M'Gregor⁵

1. Travels, Vol I, p. 258.
2. Glossary of Punjab Tribes and Castes, Vol. I, p. 682.
3. History of the Sikhs, p. 50.
4. The Sikhs, pp. 141—142.
5. History of the Sikhs, pp. 52—54.

all are of the view that the grant of the land at which the city of Amritsar developed, was made by Akbar to Guru Ram Das, and it was the latter who founded the city. *Sikhan De Raj Di Viakhi*, supports the view that the city was founded by Guru Ram Das¹. M'Gregor writes that Akbar visited Guru Ram Das, was impressed with his dispositions and issued an order "that a certain portion of ground should be granted to Ram Das, which was accordingly done, and the ground, thus bestowed, being of a circular form, was named Chukkur Ram Das. In this enclosure the Gooroo built Umritsir, and went occasionally from Goindwal to reside there, and his disciples and followers settled at that place." Guru Arjan, he continues, moved from Goindwal to Amritsar, completed the Holy *Granth*, placed it "in the temple erected in the tank, and crowds frequented it for the purpose of bathing and hearing the *Granth* read. The Chukkur Ram Das was then enlarged." According to the Amritsar District Gazetteer², the pool which formed the nucleus of the city, had been a favourite resort of Guru Nanak. The site was first occupied by Guru Ram Das. In 1577 he obtained grant of the site, together with 500 bigas of land from the Emperor Akbar on payment of Rs. 700/- akbari to the Zamindars of Tung, who owned the land. It may here be explained that none of these writers is a contemporary of Guru Amar Das and Ram Das. But the account given by District Gazetteers and some European travellers seems definitely more authentic than that of Suraj Prakash; the Sikh tradition also being in their favour. Hence it seems more probable that the city was founded by Guru Ram Das.

"In founding the town of Amritsar at a central spot," thus writes Latif, "the Guru laid the foundation of the future greatness of the Sikhs as a nation, for they were enabled now to rally at a common place of worship, conveniently situated, both as regards distance and fertility of the

Writers
say

Ram Das
constructed
it

More
reliable

Its
importance

Common
place

1. Translation by M. H. Court, p. 20.

2. *Asr*, D. G. (1883-84), p. 61.

soil.”¹ Amritsar, indeed, has played a very important part in the history of the Sikhs. It has acted as a Mecca to the Sikhs, and the Sikhs living at far away places, have always deemed their visit to the Punjab as incomplete, if they did not go to Amritsar. The tank of nectar at Amritsar has been a symbol of unity to the Sikhs, and it has played a very important part in the development of martial qualities among them. Whenever a tyrant wanted to destroy the Sikhs, he started with the destruction of the *Harimandir* or the temple at the tank, and the Sikhs always considered the protection of the tank and the *Harimandir* equivalent to the protection of their honour, and the pages of the Sikh history are red with the blood of the thousands of the valiant sons of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh—the tenth Sikh Guru, who laid down their lives for this sake. Whenever an important expedition was undertaken by the Sikhs, they started with a dip at the tank. Once this was done, lambs were converted into lions, invincible and gallant, who changed the very course of history.

Situated in the centre of the population of Jats, the flower of the Punjab people, who recruited themselves into the forces of Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh and thus acted as an important factor in transforming the Sikhs into Khalsa, Amritsar provided a convenient base for propaganda among them. Surrounded by fertile lands, the city soon grew into a very important centre of trade in the Punjab, and thus it brought a very rich revenue to the Sikh Gurus in the shape of offerings and later to Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the shape of taxes. Such has been the importance of this city, which was founded and developed by Guru Ram Das, whose this single step, distinguished him as one of the Gurus who played very important part in the transformation and consolidation of the Sikh church.

Other activities of the Guru towards the transformation of Sikhism are comparatively insignificant. The Guru is said to have earnestly taken up the propaganda for the spread

1. History of the Punjab, p. 353.

of the Sikh faith. Several important Sikhs were sent for the purpose towards different directions. Bhai Gurdas went to Agra and made many new Sikhs. According to some writers, it was Guru Ram Das who started *Masand* system, which placed the financial position of the Sikhs on more firm footings.

Some of the compositions of the Guru led to the development of more of the distinct social practices among the Sikhs. The Guru composed '*Ghorian*', or the songs to be sung at a ceremony before marriage. Before this the songs sung by the Sikh women on the occasion were filthy in character. The new songs replacing them, also made it possible for the Sikhs to remember at all the times of happiness and sorrow alike, the Almighty in whose name the songs were composed; and the Guru who composed them. The famous song: 'ਕੀਤਾ ਚੌੜੀਐ ਕੰਮ ਸੁਹਰਿ ਪਹਿ ਆਖੀਐ', was also composed by him, and thus the Sikhs developed distinct social practices and ceremonies to be performed at the time of birth, marriage and death, which helped in separating them from the common mass of Hindus.

During the time of Guru Ram Das, Baba Sri Chand, the founder of the *Udasi* sect among the Sikhs, visited the Guru, and now, after a long discussion, rapprochement was made between the two. The superior character of the Sikhs seems to have been established, but both promised support to each other for the future; Guru Hargobind himself permitting his son Gurditta later to enter the *Udasi* sect. After the death of Banda Bahadur, when the Mughal rulers decided to destroy the very seed of the Sikh faith in the Punjab, *Udasis* who could not easily be distinguished from the common mass of Hindus kept the spark of the Sikh faith alight. Whenever the ranks of the Khalsa were depleted, the *Udasi* sect offered a vast ground to replenish them.

Another development took place in the time of Guru Ram Das, which, to a very great extent, helped in changing the Sikh character from purely religious to religious-cum-political. So far the succession to the pontificate had been

Rap-
proache-
ment with
Udasis

Succession
hereditary

conferred only on merit, but now a change took place in it. The Sikh records relate a story that once Bibi Bhani was helping Guru Amar Das at the time of ablution when a leg of the footstool on which the Guru sat, broke. The Guru should have fallen down but for the presence of mind of Bibi Bhani, who immediately placed her hand under the broken part. A nail pierced through her delicate hand, and when the Guru noticed the colour of the water flowing down turn crimson, he was moved at the Bibi's act of sacrifice and invited her to ask for a boon. Bibi Bhani requested that Guruship should be made hereditary in her line. The Guru was taken aback, but since he had made the promise, he granted the boon with the qualification that it would be attended by many troubles. The successors would have to make many sacrifices.

Bibi Bhani

Got it

Gurdas's
view

In this connection, however, Bhai Gurdas says thus :

"What is previously received must be restored and descend to the line that owneth it.

The Sodhi King Ram Das sat on the throne, and was called the true Guru."

M'Gregor

In this connection M'Gregor too writes : Ram Das was "of the Chuttree caste and Sodee family, a lineal descendant of Sodee Rao, who abdicated the throne of Lahore in favour of his uncle Kulput (Bedi)," in the ancient times, with the promise that Bedis would return it to the Sodhis in the Kalyug. It was due to this fact that Guru Amar Das had to grant succession to Ram Das to remain hereditary in his line. A similar story is narrated by Guru Gobind Singh in his Bachitra Natak.

Bachitra
NatakHereditary
principle

Guru Ram Das, thus, instead of choosing a person from outside his family, appointed his youngest son, Guru Arjan, to succeed him. Later on Guru Arjan began to develop closer relations with Mehrban, the son of his elder brother Prithi Mal. Hargobind, his son, and the boy's mother grew apprehensive about the *Gaddi*, and asked the Guru to hand over to them the symbols of Guruship. Thus relate the Sikh records. Guru Arjan is said to have put these symbols

in a room, closed it from the outside, and set it on fire, and declared that whosoever brought them out would be granted the succession. Mehrban jumped into the fire and brought them out, but still he could not secure succession to the pontificate. Hargobind had better hereditary rights, and the succession had to go to him.¹ This established yet further the hereditary right in Guruship.

Estab-
lished

Without entering into the merit or demerit of these stories, we may consider the consequences of this new development. This, writes Latif, changed the very character of Guruship and "materially contributed to the growth of Sikh power, for henceforward the Guru was looked upon by his disciples not only in the light of a spiritual guide but also as a worldly lord and a ruling sovereign."² The Guru now became *Sucha Padshah*, or the true king, as Dr. Narang writes.³ "The fundamental ideal of surrender and service," writes Dr. Bannerji, "is absent and the sole concern of the legend (regarding how Guruship was handed over to Sodhis) is to provide a sort of historical justification for succession to the Guruship on grounds of heredity." The succession seems now to have become a family and personal concern, and claims to it are paralleled with claims to a throne, and hence to a sort of political power over the followers. We find a similar type of movement developing in the 19th century among the Kukas. The Kuka Gurus have been considered to be the successors in the line of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh, by the Kukas, and there is nothing secret in the fact that the Kuka Guru, Ram Singh was developing his contacts with Russia, with the purpose that Russia would expel the British from India and help establish the Sikh rule, at least in the Punjab, under the kingship of the Kuka Guru. A kingdom, perhaps, was not aimed at in the sixteenth century by the Sikh Guru's themselves, yet their acts, such as the one making the Guruship hereditary,

The
Consequen-
ces

Political
power

1. Shamsheer Singh, *Sikh te Sikh Ithas*, pp. 50—51.

2. Latif, *op. cit.*, p. 253

3. Dr. G. C. Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, p. 253.

Sucha
Padshah

did give an impression to the Sikhs as if the Guru was their king, nay a True King or *Sucha Padshah*, as against the false kings of the Mughals. The true king ruled his followers not only in the present life, but he was expected to rule and guide them in the lives to come as well. The orders of the true king were of greater importance than those of a false one ; and herein lay the difference which prepared the Sikhs later to challenge the authority of the Mughals. Clearly thus, the establishment of hereditary principle in the Guruship was a step of far reaching consequences in transforming the character of the Sikhs.

CHAPTER IX

TRANSFORMATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF SIKHISM

D—GURU ARJAN

Life—I

Born on 15th April, 1563, at Goindwal, Arjan Dev was the youngest son of Guru Ram Das. From his very childhood, Arjan Dev loved seclusion, and was a perfect picture of devotion and humility. Guru Amar Das had high estimations for this boy, and once, thus says a tradition, when he was in his siesta, Arjan Dev, yet a child, found his way to his bed. It was a serious thing for any body to disturb the Guru while taking his repose. Bibi Bhani ran to take him out of the room, but Guru Amar Das asked her to let him come, saying :

Born 1593

The
prophecy

“ਯੇਹ ਮੇਰਾ ਦੋਹਤਾ ਪਾਨੀ ਕਾ ਬੋਹਤਾ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ।”

meaning thereby that ‘this grandson of mine shall be a boat to take mankind across the ocean of the world.’

Guru Ram Das had three sons, the eldest was Prithia, the second, Mahadev, and the youngest Arjan Dev. The Guru had a greater attachment with the youngest, and while Mahadev being of other-worldly character, did not mind it, Prithia felt very much jealous about it, and was constantly intriguing to discredit Arjan Dev. Once, the records tell us, Sahari Mal, the first cousin of the Guru who lived at Lahore, came and invited the Guru to grace with his presence, the marriage of his son. The Guru being busy, he asked Prithia to go instead. But the latter refused probably with a two-fold motive ; firstly, as the chronicler explains, Prithia being in-charge of offerings to the Guru, a considerable portion of

Three sons

Arjan
obedient

which he used furtively to set aside for himself, he did not want the illicit gain to fall to some one else during his absence to Lahore. Secondly, the time for appointing the successor was drawing anigh, and Prithia wanted to remain by his father's side, lest some one else took the advantage. Mahadev took little interest in sublunary affairs, but Arjan Dev, a perfect picture of humility who did not care for wealth and worldly advantages agreed willingly to do as his father was pleased to ask. Arjan Dev left for Lahore, with the injunction that he would remain there at the temple to give religious instructions to the Sikhs, till he was invited to come back. Arjan Dev remained at Lahore for a long time but no invitation to come back came from his father. His heart pined to have the sight of the true Guru, and finally he did write him a letter beseeching him to grant him a chance to have his sight. The letter was however intercepted by Prithia, and it could not reach its destination. Arjan Dev wrote second letter, but it also met the same fate. Suspecting a foul play, he wrote the third letter and writing No. 3 on it so that the Guru might know that already two letters had been written to him ; he gave special instructions to the messenger to deliver it personally to the Guru. The third letter did reach its destination, and the Guru getting Prithia's house searched, to the discomfiture of the deceitful man ; discovered the first two letters hidden inside his coat. The Guru, thereupon, immediately sent a message to Arjan Dev to come back, and on his arrival, sent for five *paisa* and a coconut, placed them before Arjan, seating him on the throne, touched his feet and asked Bhai Budha to affix the *Tilak* or the mark of spiritual sovereignty to his head, proclaiming Arjan Dev thereafter as Guru. Prithia feeling insulted that he being the eldest son, had been ignored, vowed to take a revenge from Guru Arjan and did not hesitate even to insult his father on several occasions, with the result that he was finally termed as *Mina* and turned out from the house. In this connection, Guru Ram Das wrote in *Suhi rag*, a few hymns from which may be quoted :

Went to
Lahore

His letters
intercepted

Arjan
became
Guru

Prithia
discredited

"They render God hearty worship on whose forehead such destiny was recorded in the beginning.

How can one be jealous of those whom my God the Creator assisteth ?

God in the beginning bestowed on his saints the ambrosial store-house of saintship.

The fool who trieth to rival them, shall have his face blackened both in this world and the next.

In the case of the four Gurus none hath ever obtained the Guruship by revilings ; it is by God's service the Guruship is obtained."

In these hymns, nowhere is the name of Prithia mentioned. Yet considering the position he was placed in, there can be no doubt regarding the correctness of the tradition that these hymns were addressed by Guru Ram Das to Prithia.

Arjan Dev thus succeeded to the pontificate in 1581, at the age of 18, in the midst of opposition from his brother Prithia, who seems to have been determined not to let the Guru live in peace. The Sikh records relate several stories of Prithia's intrigues to harm the Guru. There might be some exaggeration in regard to their details, but there can be no doubt regarding Prithia's intentions towards the Guru. Thus we learn that immediately after Guru Arjan's accession, Prithia entered into intrigues with Sulahi Khan, the revenue officer of the Lahore province, with whose help he was able to secure all the taxes and house rents of the Guru's property to himself and his brother Mahadev ; Guru Arjan retaining to himself only the voluntary offerings of the faithful.

Succeeded
in 1581

Prithia
intrigued

Karmo, the Prithia's wife is said by the tradition to have been very much instrumental in instigating the latter against the Guru. We have Guru Arjan's own words in *Gauri ki Var I*, which run thus :

Karmo's
instigations

"The perverse are all day occupied with avarice, though they pretend otherwise ;

At night oppressed by drowsiness and their nine apertures relaxed, they worship not God.

Women exercise power over the perverse, and ever make fair promises ;

But they who act as women tell them, are impure, thoughtless, and foolish.”¹

The
consolation

These hymns are said to have been written in connection with Karmo's instigations to Prithia, and although there is no mention of Prithia's name in them, the composition itself as it is does not leave much doubt regarding the correctness of the tradition. The sole consolation left with Prithia and his wife after Guru Arjan's succession is said to have been the hope of their son Mihrban obtaining the Guruship after the death of Guru Arjan, who had no son. But their hopes were dashed to the ground when after some time Gango, the Guru's wife became pregnant. Prithia's hostile activities at this became more violent and the Guru therefore decided to leave Amritsar. He moved to Wadali, a village at a distance of six or seven miles from Amritsar, and there in 1595, was Hargobind born.

Turned
into sorrow

Plans to
murder
Hargobind

A nurse
and a
Brahmin

When the news of the birth of the young heir reached Amritsar, it "reminded the Sikhs of the time when the whole of Ajudhia rejoiced at the accession of Ram to the sovereignty, and Kekai, one of his father's wives alone, like Prithia and Karmo, mourned the event." Not reconciling to the fate, Prithia and his wife now began to plan poisoning of Hargobind to death. On two occasions the attempt was made to poison the child, but both the attempts failed. At one occasion a nurse was sent who poisoned the nipples of her breast and offered them to the child, but while doing so she fainted. At another occasion a Brahmin was sent who slipped poison into a cup of milk meant for the child. The child, however, refused to take it and the Brahmin died of colic shortly after. While regarding the story of the nurse we have only to rely upon the Sikh tradition, regarding the Brahmin we have a definite proof in the shape of Guru

1. Macauliffe, iii, p. 42.

Arjan's hymns in *raag Bhairo*, which run thus :—

*"The poison produced no impression whatever on him ;
The evil Brahman died of the colic
The Supreme Being himself preserved his servant ;
The sinner died by the Guru's power."*¹

Without entering, however, into the details of Prithia's activities to harm the Guru at this stage, which were very much instrumental in the execution of Guru Arjan and in bringing about many troubles to Hargobind after his accession to the pontificate, and with which we shall deal at more proper places, we might study here the more important aspect of Guru Arjan's life, which helped in yet further transformation and consolidation of the Sikh church.

Transformation—II

The first task before Guru Arjan was the completion of the tank at Amritsar, the sanctity of which was increased by the construction of Harmandir, or the temple of God in its midst. According to the Sikh records, while the Hindu temples are closed on three sides and opened only towards the east or rising sun, the great Sikh temple at Amritsar was purposely opened on all the four sides, which meant that the Sikh worship was open to all, and not concerned with sun-worship. After completing the temple, in his characteristic manner, the Guru attributed all his success to the mercy of God, and in this connection he composed many hymns. Thus he said : "the Creator stood in the midst of the work, and not a hair of any man's head was touched."² The Guru also proclaimed on the advantages of the tank as :

Tank and
temple of
Amritsar

*"He who batheth herein, having meditated on his God,
Shall be completely restored to health.
He who batheth in the tank of the saints
Shall obtain salvation."*³

Its
advantages

1. Macauliffe, iii, p. 47.

2. Ibid, p. 12.

3. Ibid, p. 13.

And
importance

The Guru also transferred his residence to Amritsar, and the place developed soon into a city and the central place of the Sikh pilgrimage. Much has been said already regarding the importance of this tank and temple in the Sikh history. Captain Bingley calls it a "common rallying point" of the Sikhs, and there is no doubt that ever since its completion, the city of Amritsar has always acted as the spiritual capital of the Sikhs.

Taran
Taran

The city of Taran Taran, the capital of the Sikhs of Majha—the middle land between the rivers Beas and the Ravi, was also founded by Guru Arjan. The importance of this city in the Sikh history, too, can not be exaggerated. Surrounded by the Jat population of the province, it has acted as the "nursery of the chivalry of the Native Army, and the home of a sturdy and strong race of agriculturists", as writes the Amritsar District Gazetteer.¹ According to Dr. G. C. Narang: "It was the light that radiated from Amritsar and Taran Taran that made the peasantry realise their strength, and transformed them from peaceful and toiling husbandmen into fiery soldiers and rulers of the soil which their ancestors had ploughed a few generations before them."² At Taran Taran, the Guru also opened an asylum for lepers, and constructed a tank; proclaiming that the lepers taking bath in it would be cured. Even in the present times, the city is visited by a large number of lepers every year, and a large part of the city itself is inhabited by lepers.

Its
importance

Bawali

Besides, the Guru also constructed a *Bawali* in the Dabbi Bazar at Lahore. This *Bawali* was filled up later by Shah Jehan, who built a mosque in its place. Maharaja Ranjit Singh destroyed the mosque and re-excavated the *Bawali*, but the *Bawali* was destroyed once again during the partition of 1947. The Guru is also said to have founded the Gobindpur town on the Beas to celebrate the birth of his son Hargobind. The town of Kartarpur near Jullundur, was also founded by him. All these activities of the Guru

Gobindpur
and
Kartarpur

1. of 1883-84.

2. Transformation of Sikhism, p. 69.

added to the number of the places of Sikh pilgrimage, dissociating them thereby from the Hindu places of pilgrimage.

Another step which the Guru took, and which proved to be of a revolutionary character was his organisation of the *Masand* System. Some writers say that the system had been organised in the time of Guru Ram Das, but this is now conclusively proved that it was organised under Guru Arjan. The Guru's activities had been expanding. Besides the *Langar*, which required ever increasing amount of resources to be run, the construction of temples, tanks and founding of new cities and towns had also been undertaken by the successive Gurus. *Manji* system had been organised in the time of Guru Amar Das, which met this problem to certain extent. But the main business of the owners of the *Manjis* had been to propagate the Sikh faith, and they were concerned less with the collection of money for the expanding activities of the Guru. Moreover, by this time, the owners of the *Manjis* had gone corrupt, and whatever utility they possessed, had been lost. All this needed a drastic step to amend. And again, the *Manji* System seems to have been organised to keep contact with the Sikhs only within the Punjab, but by this time, as the Sikh records assert, the Sikhism had spread to almost all the parts of India. In order to reach them all, it was essential that the system should be placed on a new footing. Moreover Prithia is said to have established personal contacts with majority of the *Manji* owners, and he obstructed the collection of funds from them. All this necessitated reform, and the Guru proclaiming that every true Sikh must contribute at least one tenth of his income towards the Guru's funds, appointed some special representatives of his in each of the locality where the Sikhs were to be found, to collect these funds and to bring them to the Guru on each Baisakhi day, when a grand *Darbar* was held.

Masand
System

Its
necessity

The character of the *Masand* System has been differently commented upon by different writers. According to Dr. G. C. Narang, the *Masand* is the "shorter form of Masand-i-Ali or His Excellency, the title of Mughal Governors. This

Its
Character

is another proof of the rising power of the Sikhs. When the Guru became the true king, his viceroys must of course be their excellencies."

The tithes

Regarding the tithes, thus writes Mohsin Fani: "Before the fifth period no tribute was exacted from the Sikhs, but presents were given by them according to their own discretion to their Guru. Arjanmal sent in his time a person to the Sikhs of each town in order to collect a tribute, in that manner, the Sikhs accustomed themselves to the government of a masand or deputy."¹ Commenting on this, writes Dr. Bannerji: "it will be seen that the voluntary contributions of the faithful were now made compulsory and arrangement was made for their collection through authorised agents, who came to be known as masands."² Cunningham and Latif, also perhaps basing their account on the above quoted words of Mohsin Fani, have forwarded the similar views. But without disputing the intentions of Mohsin Fani, it seems difficult to understand that the Guru should have levied such compulsory tributes from the Sikhs. The Guru's was no political or a police rule upon the Sikhs. It was voluntarily that the people joined this faith, and if the Guru was to ask for a price in the shape of tithes from those who desired to be his followers, much of the force which attracted the Sikhs to him should have wanned. Nor did the Sikhs occupy the status that of a subject to a ruler. The Sikhs were simply the followers of the Guru, and just as in the time of Guru Gobind Singh, even without receiving baptism and keeping hair, a Sikh could remain a Sikh, though he could not become a Singh, it is difficult to imagine that in the time of Guru Arjan, without paying the tithes, a Sikh could not remain a Sikh. Paying of the tithes could be made an essential condition pre-requisite for the membership of some inner circle, if ever there was one, it could not be made compulsory for the general mass of the followers, majority of whom in every community or an organisation, occupy only a status of sympathisers.

Not compulsory

The arguments

1. *Dabistan*, Vol II, p. 271.

2. *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Vol, I.

Nevertheless, the step taken by the Guru was indeed revolutionary. Even if the contribution levied was voluntary, the Sikhs paid it to the Guru more willingly than they paid their revenues to the Mughal Government. The *Masands* appointed their deputies to help them, they all propagated the Sikh faith and collected the tithes, which were willingly paid. And as all of them were considered to be the representatives of the Guru, they were respected, and even in their mutual disputes etc., the Sikhs preferred to go to them than to any court of the State. The system thus entailed political authority without a desire for it on the Guru's part. Moreover, as the financial sources of the Guru strengthened, it became easier for him to arrange his budget, and to undertake more works of propagation and consolidation of the Sikh faith.

The
effects

The Guru also undertook a propaganda tour of the Manjha country. The cause of this is said in the Sikh records to have been the Guru's intention to escape the harassment at the hands of his quarrelsome brother Prithia. Nevertheless, the tour brought about very good results in the shape of a large number of people joining his faith. It was also during the course of this tour that the Guru laid the foundation of the cities of Taran Taran and Kartarpur. The Guru visited the village Bhaini, which was re-named as Cholha, then he visited Khanpur and at Khara, pleased with "the flowering woods and glades, the limpid water, and the fresh and exhilarating atmosphere¹" he founded the city of Taran Taran. In the Jullundur district the Guru founded another city, Kartarpur. During this tour, he also visited, besides several other places, the shrine of Guru Nanak at Dera Baba Nanak in the Gurdaspur district; and thence he proceeded to Barath in the same district to visit Sri Chand, Guru Nanak's son. Sri Chand is said to have censured here the conduct of Prithia, when he learnt from the Guru that he had to undertake the tour because of that. After that the Guru returned to Amritsar.

Propaganda
tour

Met
Sri Chand

1. Macauliffe, iii, p. 25.

Compila-
tion of
Adi Granth

The monumental business done by the Guru was, however, his compilation of the *Adi Granth*. Copies of the hymns of the first three Gurus were said to have been procured by him from Mohan. The hymns of the fourth Guru were already in his possession, and adding those of his own, Guru Arjan compiled the *Granth*. We reserve this topic for discussion in a separate chapter, and will not say anything more than a few words from Archer who writes that the *Granth* "at once occupied in the regard of the Sikhs a position such as that of the Vedas, the Bible or the Koran.

"The compilation of the *Granth* was a process atonce indicative in itself of what Sikhism was to be."¹

Fostered
trade

The writers are almost unanimous that the Guru also did something to foster trade and industry among the Sikhs. While there is nothing unconceivable in the Guru doing this to emphasise the character of householders among the Sikhs, some writers in the heat of conjectures have gone to the extent of suggesting that the trade was carried by the Guru himself with public funds of the community to strengthen the Sikh church with a political motive. Cunningham writes, "Nor was Arjan heedless of other means of acquiring wealth and influence ; he dispatched his followers into foreign countries to be as keen in traffic as they were zealous in belief, and it is probable that his transactions as a merchant were extensive, although confined to purchase of horses in Turkistan."² But there is available no reliable evidence in support of these contentions. For instance the three horses brought by a Sikh named Sadah for the Guru from Iraq, and which were seized by a tyrant named Khalil Beg, were clearly said to be for the domestic use of the Guru, and there is no

Himself
not trader

1. The Sikhs, p 150.

2. Cunningham, History of the Sikhs, p 25.

Archer also supports this view and says, the motive may not be "entirely commercial—it was at least missionary, also.....(it) brought both its financial profit and its converts," op. cit., p. 153.

suggestion of trade profits either in this or in any other similar transaction.

But even if he himself did not practice and only encouraged his Sikhs in it, "this step," writes Dr. Narang, "though apparently most ordinary was productive of manifold good to the rising power of Sikh theocracy."¹ In the first place, it was a blow upon the caste system, which was a barrier against the Hindus going trans-Indus. Secondly, for the purpose of these transactions, the Sikhs had to pass through the lands inhabited by Mahommedans of fanatic character, and the sturdy inhabitants of the Indian frontiers. The Sikh contacts with such people developed and strengthened in them the characteristics of a warrior nation. The Sikhs undertaking this trade, earned huge profits, and thus besides enriching themselves, they also enriched the Guru's finances by their contributions in the shape of tithings. It also developed among the Sikhs a taste for riding and as Dr. Narang writes, it "laid the foundation of the future armies of the Khalsa," which played so significant a role in the history of the Punjab. It also helped in establishing the domestic character of Sikhism, and removed the mis-understandings which some of the Guru Nanak's hymns, supposed to be condemnatory of such professions, had caused.

The Guru also introduced several reforms among the Sikh habits. He for instance encouraged widow re-marriage, by encouraging a Sikh, Hema Chaudhri, to marry one. He condemned the use of intoxicants and opened the institutions such as the leprosy asylum at Taran Taran.

The pomp and splendour of the Guru's court grew in the time of Guru Arjan. Panth Prakash writes that wealth and splendour kept at a distance of twenty miles from Guru Nanak, the distance remained only six miles in the time of Guru Angad, they knocked at the door of Guru Amar Das, fell at the feet of Guru Ram Das, and entered the very house of Guru Arjan. Guru Arjan sat on a throne and lived like a king. Although he remained as humble as ever, as the

The
benefits

Caste
system

Warrior

Tithings

Riders

Domestic

Sikh habits

Pomp and
splendour

1. Narang, op. cit.

tradition says that once, enquired, the Guru told Baba Sri Chand that he kept a long beard to wipe the feet of holy persons such as he was ; yet, he "kept great state," writes M'Gregor, "and lived in splendour unknown to his predecessors. He kept fine horses, and was clothed in costly raiments¹." Payne writes : "Arjan is celebrated, not only as the compiler of the Granth Sahib, but as the first Guru to assume the temporal as well as the spiritual control of his followers²." Or as Dr. Narang writes : "Though himself a man of simple habits and great humility, his durbar became a place of splendour and magnificence.³" All developments, though they might have been undertaken without the least political motive, yet were conducive to the development of the one. When there was money enough, and followers many to do the Guru's bidding, it could not be difficult to raise an army and carry territorial conquest and establish an empire. An army in the circumstance was actually raised by Guru Arjan's successor, though for a different purpose. Territorial conquest was not made, nor a political power established, which seems to have been foreign to the Gurus' elements. Yet it did raise apprehensions in the mind of the authorities, as, Mohsin Fani writes, the Guru was developing a self-Government within the Empire, or a state within the State.

While all these developments were taking place, and the Guru was developing his influence and importance, his enemies were planning to bring about his ruin. The Guru's inveterate foe, Prithia, had been considerably weakened by the accidental death of Sulahi Khan, his friend and patron, whose horse started at the accidental flight of a bird from under his feet and ran with his rider straight into a kiln in full blast, which belonged to Prithia and which Sulahi Khan had come to visit; reducing in a moment's time to a mass of cinders both rider and the horse. But soon Prithia was more

1. History of the Sikhs, pp. 53-54.

2. A Short History of the Sikhs, p. 31.

3. Dr. Narang, op. cit.

Their
character

Guru's
enemies

Sulahi
Khan
killed

than compensated for this loss by Chandu, the Dewan of Lahore and a man of more formidable character, who joined the ranks of the Guru's enemies. Chandu's hostility against the Guru is proverbial in the Sikh records, which sprang from the Guru's rejection of his daughter's hand for Hargobind, the Guru's son, because of some of his uncalled for derogatory remarks against the Guru, in the initial stages. Prithia incited both the Kazis and Brahmins, telling them that the Guru had blasphemed both Muslims and the Hindus in his newly compiled Granth. They both lay a complaint against the Guru, and their memorial was duly placed before the Emperor, through the influence of Chandu. At the Emperor's order, the Guru deputed Bhai Budha and Bhai Gurdas to take the Granth before him, and they were able to convince the Emperor that the complaint against the Guru was groundless; whereafter they were both dismissed by the Emperor with dresses of honour for their Guru and for themselves.

Chandu
joined
Prithia

A complaint

Rejected

Dr. Bannerji has characterised the above story as doubtful of occurrence in the absence of independent reliable testimony. But although there is no independent testimony in regard to this story which is based only on tradition, there is a similar story told at another place, where a complaint was presented in the Emperor's court by Sulahi Khan, together with Prithia, against the Guru, but which was rejected as the Emperor would not interfere in the affairs of the religious men. And regarding this we have a strong testimony in the shape of the Guru's own words, who says:

Bannerji
contra-
dicted

*"The blind fool told lies in the true court,
And smote his head with his hands.
They who commit sin contract disease.
God himself sat as the judge.
Prithia is involved in the consequences of his own acts;
All his weal shall pass away with his life."*

This clearly proves that the incidents of complaints going to the Emperor were by no means improbable, and in regard to the story referred to by Dr. Bannerji, if there is no

No proof
against

independent testimony in its favour, there is no definite argument against it as well. A tradition can not be rejected merely because it is a tradition, when there are no proofs to falsify it.

Akbar's
visit

The tradition continues, the discomfiture of the conspirators became complete when the Emperor not only rejected the complaint, he rather also promised to go to visit the Guru when he was returning from Lahore whither he was then proceeding. And that the Emperor actually paid a visit to the Guru, is corroborated by Badauni, who according to Macauliffe "states that on another occasion, namely, the thirteenth of the month Azur (Jamadi ul sani), Akbar, with a gorgeous military retinue, crossed the Bias and went to Goindwal to visit Guru Arjan, whose teaching and character he appreciated."¹ And the Khulasatut-Twarikh writes that a small portion of revenue was also remitted by Akbar, at the request of the Guru, though the Sikh tradition

Confirmed

Remittal

High-water
mark

Akbar died

Execution

Akbar's visit to the Guru must be regarded as the high water-mark of the Guru's career from the secular point of view. This gave him an added prestige and facilitated the further propagation of his faith.

Unfortunately, however, the tolerant Emperor Akbar died soon after this, and was succeeded by his fanatic son Jehangir, under whom the conspirators against the Guru got a full chance which resulted in the Guru's execution. This event proved to be a turning point in the history of the Sikhs, which would be better dealt with in detail, in a separate chapter that follows.

1. Macauliffe, iii, p. 84.

CHAPTER X

TRANSFORMATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF SIKHISM

E—THE EXECUTION OF GURU ARJAN

If we had a short review of the discussions so far held regarding the transformation of Sikhism, we would come across the following points. The faith as preached by Guru Nanak, was not very much different from that preached by other Bhakti reformers. Yet Guru Nanak's teachings led to the foundation of a separate church. His establishment of *Sangats* at different places, gave an opportunity to the Sikhs to develop social contacts among themselves. The development of *Langar* acted as a levelling influence in the Sikh society and helped in destroying caste distinctions. The greatest step towards this direction was the Guru's appointment of a successor to continue guiding the Sikhs and establish them ultimately as a separate church-nation. The *Gurmukhi* script had existed before, but by improving upon it, changing its name and making an extensive use of it, Guru Angad developed it as a separate script for the Sikhs. The activities of Guru Nanak's successors in separating the Sikhs from the *Udasis* established Sikhism as a religion of householders, harmonising the wordly pursuits with true religion. The division of the temporal kingdom of the Sikhs by Guru Amar Das into 22 spiritual provinces each under the charge of a Sikh who looked after their religious affairs, strengthened the existence of the Sikhs yet further. New methods of celebrating festivals of Dewali etc., distinct social practices and habits for the Sikhs developed by the Guru, distinguished the Sikhs yet further from the Hindus. Building of the cities such as Amritsar and the construction of *Bawalis* etc., gave the Sikhs their own places

A review

Sangats

Langar

Successor

Gurmukhi

Not Udasis

Manjis

New methods

Places of pilgrimage

Scripture

Masand
systemBlood, a
seal

of pilgrimage. Guru Arjan gave the Sikhs a separate scripture and brought their finances on better footings by organising the *Masand* system. Of all the factors, however, three things are necessary for the formation of a nation—language, scripture and habits. All the three had been secured to the Sikhs by the end of Guru Arjan's pontificate. The blood of a martyr always affixes a seal on what a nation has already achieved, and this was given to them when Guru Arjan laid down his life, thus, in addition, founding a tradition of sacrifices which the Sikhs developed, and which gave to them a new line of action and thought, or a turning point in their history.

The Causes

Clash
inherent

Investigation into the causes which led to the crisis, makes an interesting study. The clash between the Sikhs and the Mughals was in fact inherent in the philosophy and thought of Guru Nanak, and in the history of the Sikhs itself. As Guru Gobind Singh writes in his *Bachitra Natak*, from one side came Babur, and from the other came Guru Nanak, the clash was immanent, as the Almighty Himself had desired :

“ਬਾਬੇ ਕੇ, ਬਾਬਰ ਕੇ ਦੁਇ, ਆਪ ਕਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਮੇਸਰ ਸਦ੍ਹੈ”

Nanak and
Babur

Guru Nanak had condemned both the Lodhis and Babur in the most naked manner. Guru Nanak characterised the Babur's invading army as the 'Bridal procession of sins', and condemned very fearlessly the destruction and havoc that it brought in India. This clearly proved that if Babur's successors did not rule the country in the right manner, Guru Nanak's successors were going to challenge them in the manner most suitable in the circumstances. Guru Nanak was succeeded by Guru Angad, and Babur was succeeded by Humayun. We have discussed how during his flight from India in 1540, Humayun visited Guru Angad at Khadur. At the time of his arrival, the Guru happened to be in a deep trance, and Humayun had to keep standing for some time which enraged him and he drew out his sword, to sever the Guru's head. Had Humayun himself been

Angad and
Humayun

not in trouble, and had the Guru not shown fearless patience and calmness at the time, the first martyrdom of the Sikhs should have occurred there and then. Akbar was tolerant, and although many complaints reached him against the Sikh Gurus, his policy of forbearance and respect towards them kept peace. Jehangir was, however, a man of different character. He was determined, as Prinsep writes, to propagate Islam and keep less patience with the non-Muslims. On the other hand, by the time of his accession to power, Guru Nanak's message had aroused the Sikh spirits. By 1604, as according to Bannerji, the Sikhs had established a strong and consolidated organisation of their own. The Sikh revenues had been put on scientific footings, definite rules of conduct had been given to them. Payne¹ writes that Guru Arjan was first to combine religion with politics, and although a political figure the Guru may not have been, yet his activities were bound to entail politics upon him. His pomp and splendour like that of kings, and his authority over the Sikhs, had according to Dr. Narang², created a State within State. All this was bound to prejudice the Muslims and arouse their antagonism, which was a clear writing on the wall.

Akbar

Jehangir

Sikh developments

There were certain other factors definitely in favour of creating a trouble between the Guru and the Mughal authorities. It had been a custom with the Gurus that the Guru *gaddi* was to be given only to capable hands and according to merit, and this principle continued to be observed by the Gurus even when the Guruship became hereditary. Thus for instance, Guru Ram Das appointed Arjan Dev his youngest son, rather than Prithia, his eldest son, as his successor. Under such circumstances, many of the aspirants for Guruship were bound to be disappointed and they were bound to create troubles for the successful candidates. Baba Sri Chand, the son of Guru Nanak, thus opposed Guru Angad and tried to give him

Unsuccessful candidates

Sri Chand

1. Short History of the Sikhs.

2. Transformation of Sikhism.

Datu, Dasu every trouble. Datu and Dasu, the sons of Guru Angad, opposed Guru Amar Das. Datu considered Guru Amar Das as his family servant, and even kicked him with his foot. Guru Ram Das had to face the similar trouble at the hands of Mohan and Mohri though not as serious as it used to be. Guru Ram Das gave the Guruship, for the first time, to his son, but yet not to the eldest. With the accession of Guru Arjan thus, Prithia, his eldest brother was antagonised.

Mohan
Mohri

Prithia

His
intrigues

We have studied how Prithia tried to harm Arjan Dev for the favour of the father that he enjoyed, even before his accession to the *gaddi*. After his accession he intrigued against him with the help of Mughal officers. Efforts were also made to murder Hargobind, Guru Arjan's son, and complaints were brought against the Guru, in the court of Emperor Akbar. But Akbar, with his tolerant policy, could not be antagonised, and Prithia's plans having failed, he migrated to the village Heri, near Lahore, in disgust. At the time, Prince Khuram (Later Shah Jehan) was the Governor of Lahore. Efforts at the court of Akbar having failed, every effort was now made, as according to the Sikh records to poison the ears of Prince Khuram, the third son of Salim, against the Guru, through his *Dewans*. Many poisonous stories were also said to have been sent by Prithia to Salim (Later Jehangir), the governor of Ajmer. And this antagonised him even before he acceded to the throne, and resulted in the crisis, as Kesar Singh Chhibar writes :

ਫੇਰ ਪ੍ਰਿਥੀਆ ਆਇਆ ਲਾਹੌਰ ।

ਬਿਨ ਦੁਸਟੀ ਗਲ ਕਰੇ ਨਾ ਹੋਰ ।

ਨਿਤ ਨਿਤ ਦੀ ਚੁਗਲੀ ਆਇ ਇਕ ਦਿਨ ਫੁਰੀ ।¹

Chandu

At the same time another factor was at work. Chandu's conflict with the Guru has already been referred to. His daughter's hand had been refused by Guru Arjan for his son Hargobind. Once the match was proposed and rejected, Chandu is said to have got permanent stigma attached to her career, because of some derogatory remarks that he had passed against the Guru. The daughter now, according to

1. *Bansawali Nama*, p. 102.

the custom obtaining among the Hindus, could be married to none else. And as she grew in age, Chandu's anxiety grew. According to Macauliffe, Chandu tried to appease the Guru in every manner, but since the Sikhs of Delhi were opposed to the match, the Guru could not be brought to agree to it. According to Latif, Chandu even sent an amount of one lakh rupees to the Guru, as a sort of *nazrana*, but without a success of converting him. All this enraged Chandu. His daughter was adding to her years, and older she grew, the more her youth troubled him. Chandu enraged at the conduct of the Guru, determined to have a revenge. Being a Dewan, he had an approach in the court of Akbar, whose ears he tried to poison, but without a success. But he was instrumental in antagonising Jehangir against the Guru before his accession to the throne, even with Prithia; and after his accession, he is said in the Sikh records to have played a major role in getting the Guru executed.

His
antagonism

The Sikh chroniclers give us some more factors which led to the crisis. Some Hindu saints and poets were also antagonised against the Guru. At the time of the compilation of the *Adi Granth*, the verses of many poets such as Kahna, Pilu, Shah Hussain and Chhaju were rejected and not entered in it, as they were supposed to be against the essential principles of Sikhism. Some of these poets withdrew themselves peacefully, while others grew indignant. The opposition of Kahna is said to have been the most virulent, who, being the cousin of Chandu, decided immediately to proceed to Lahore and move the authorities against some of the verses in the *Granth*, supposed to be blasphemous of both the Hindu and the Muslim beliefs. Although Kahna died on his way to Lahore, the persons such as Prithia took an advantage of the situation and instigated both Hindus and the Muslims. A complaint was duly presented before Akbar, which, as we have discussed was rejected.

Rejected
poets

Kahna

The
complaint

Bir Bal, the minister of Akbar, is also said to have been ill-disposed towards the Sikhs, upon whom he wanted to levy a tribute. When he was given the charge of the North

Bir Bal

West Frontier campaign; on his way thither, he tried to impose a levy upon the Guru, and threatened to sack Amritsar, if the Guru did not pay. The Guru naturally refused, and Bir Bal was just going to wreak his vengeance, when he received the orders to proceed to the Frontier in haste. But he left with a warning that unless the Guru paid the contribution, he would take his action against him on his return. But Bir Bal met his end in the campaign and thus no vengeance could be wreaked. Yet, however, all this vitiated the atmosphere, from the effect of which Akbar's successor, Jehangir could not escape.

Khusro's
rebellion

The crisis was, however, precipitated in 1606, when an incident occurred. Prince Khusro, the younger son of Salim (Jehangir), who had been born of the sister of Raja Maan Singh, and was married to the only daughter of Mirza Aziz Koka, being a young man of high moral character, and excellent qualities of head and heart, had created a very good impression on the mind of Akbar. Akbar was not favourably disposed towards Jehangir, and he for sometime carried the plan of giving the throne to him. Ultimately, however, Salim could not be easily brushed aside, his claims on the throne were recognised, and he was appointed to succeed Akbar. Five months after Salim's accession to the throne, encouraged by Raja Maan Singh and Mirza Aziz Koka, Khusro revolted against his father, Jehangir. Jehangir ordered the Imperial forces to capture him, but Khusro escaped and proceeded towards Afghanistan. On the way, he visited the Guru, and different views are expressed as to how the Guru got implicated in the rebellion.

Guru
involved

Different
views

Macauliffe writes that moved by compassion, his friendly feelings towards Khusro, who had visited him along with Akbar a few times previously, and his respect towards the late monarch, whose grand son Khusro was, the Guru "gave him five thousand rupees to defray his expenses to Kabul."¹ Mohsin Fani, however, says that the Guru merely offered prayers for Khusro². While Jahangir himself writes : "At last

1. Macauliffe, op. cit, iii, p. 85.

2. Troyer and Shea, *Dabistan*, Vol. II, p. 272.

when Khusro passed along this road this insignificant fellow (Arjan) proposed to wait upon him. Khusro happened to halt at the place where he was, and he came out and did homage to him. He behaved to Khusro in certain special ways and made on his forehead a fingermark in saffron, which the Indians (Hinduwan) call qashqa and is considered propitious."² According to some Sikh writers, even if the saffron mark was made by the Guru on Khusro's forehead, it did not mean any complicity of the Guru in the rebellion. It was merely done as a good wish for his safe journey, for the Guru had a regard for Khusro's late grand father, Akbar. Whatever it be, it is doubtless true that the Guru did compromise himself, in however trivial manner, in the rebellion of Khusro, which could be regarded something very serious.

Did
compromise

Khusro, however, was seized by the Imperial troops as he was crossing the Jhelum, and taken in chains to his father. How much did this participation of the Guru in the Khusro's rebellion, result in his execution, here again different views are available. Majority of the Sikh writers ignore the incident altogether, and explain as if Chandu's machinations alone brought the things to a head. Some of them do make its mention, but in a very insignificant manner. The consensus of opinion among them is that the Guru's increasing influence and wealth, his inclusion in the Granth of some hymns which, as it was said, blasphemed both Hindus and the Muslims, and his being called 'Sachcha Padshah', or the 'True King' as against the 'False Kings' of the Mughals; all this had aroused the indignation of several interests. The fanatic Kazis in Jehangir's court had also played their part against the Guru. And Chandu, who had his own grievance against the Guru, took an advantage of the situation. Jehangir was prevailed upon to visit the Punjab, and during his visit, the case of the Guru was brought before him, with one pretext or the other, and the Guru was shown to be a man who gave refuge to doubtful characters, and who wanted to defame the

A cause of
execution

Sikh view

both Hindu and the Muslim faiths. Jehangir ordered the Guru to present himself in his court, and asked him there to erase certain hymns from the Granth, and add some in the praise of Islam, which he naturally refused, and thus a punishment was imposed upon him. Some Sikh writers support the above account forwarding the proof that the Emperor had passed through the whole tract of Manjha, stopping even at Goindwal where the Guru resided, punishing those who had helped Khusro in one way or the other, but no complaint in this respect was received by him against the Guru. It was only when he had finished with the business, they assert, and was preparing to go a-hunting that the Guru's case came before him. Clearly thus, had the Guru been blamed of having a complicity in the Khusro's rebellion, he should have been punished earlier along with others blamed of the same crime.

A proof

Jehangir supports

Strangely enough, this seems to be supported by the account given by Jehangir himself who writes thus: "In Goindwal, which is on the river Biyah (Beas), there was a Hindu named Arjun, in the garments of sainthood and sanctity, so much so that he had captured many of the simple-hearted of the Hindus, and even of the ignorant and foolish followers of Islam, by his ways and manners, and they had loudly sounded the drum of his holiness. They called him Guru and from all sides stupid people crowded to worship and manifest complete faith in him. For three or four generations (of spiritual successors) they had kept his shop warm. Many times it occurred to me to put a stop to this vain affair or to bring him into the assembly of the people of Islam."¹ This would tend to prove that the Guru's religious practices had already antagonised the Emperor against the Guru, and even if the Guru was involved in any manner in the Khusro's rebellion, it was not the main cause for his execution, although it did provide the opportunity for the purpose. The Guru was mainly a victim of religious fanaticism, which was made a use of by the interested persons

Main cause

1. Rogers and Beveridge, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 72.

such as Chandu and Prithia. J. N. Sarkar's view that "Guru Arjan merely suffered the customary punishment of a political offender¹," seems thus to be a hasty conclusion, drawn without discerning truth from legendary details.

Sarkar
hasty

Regarding the punishment that was awarded to the Guru, the Sikh tradition holds that the Guru was asked by the Emperor to pay a fine of two lakh rupees and erase certain hymns from the Granth, which were opposed to the Hindu and the Muslim faiths. The Guru, however, refused to do any of the things, and said that the money he possessed, belonged to the Sikhs, and the views expressed in the Granth, represented truth, and it was impossible for him to violate either the trust or the truth. According to some Sikh chroniclers, Chandu paid the fine from his own pocket and purchased the person of the Guru to do with him as he liked. They further assert that the Guru was determined to make the sacrifice to create a healthy tradition for the Sikhs; because, as they write, the Sikhs of Lahore offered to unite and raise a subscription to discharge the Guru's obligation, but the Guru ordered them strictly to desist from such action. The offer of Mian Mir, a Muslim saint of Lahore, to intercede on the Guru's behalf, and that of the daughter-in-law of Chandu to help him, were similarly rejected. And the Guru preferred to bear the punishment than to pay the fine². The Guru was, thus, subjected by Chandu to different types of tortures. He was seated in red-hot caldrons for hours together, burning sand was poured on his head, and the heat of the month of May at Lahore, was itself made the worst use of. After five days of tortures, according to some, with blisters all over his body, the Guru asked for a permission to go to the Ravi for a bath, which was granted by Chandu. The Guru went to the Ravi and there vanished into the water. This would, however, amount to a sort of suicide, which ill-matches with the Guru's refusal to accept help against the punishment, from any quarter. The possibility seems to be that with blisters all over his body,

The
punishment
Sikh view

Chandu
paid

Help
refused

Tortures

1. J. N. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. III, p. 308.

2. See Macauliffe, iii, pp. 92-101.

Death

when the Guru plunged himself into the cold water of the Ravi, it caused him a shooting pain, of which he died.

Mohsin
Fani's view

Mohsin Fani also writes : "The king ordered the imprisonment of Arjun-mal, and wanted to extort a large sum of money from him. The Guru was helpless; they kept him a prisoner in the sandy country of Lahore, until he died of the heat of the sun and ill-treatment¹." The Emperor himself, however does not make a mention of the fine at all, and seems

Emperor's
view

perhaps to exclude the possibility of torture as well, as he says : "When this (news about Guru Arjan and Khusro) came to my ear and I clearly understood the folly, I ordered them to produce him and handed over his houses, dwelling-place, and children to Murtaza Khan, and having confiscated his property commanded that he should be put to death."² But the account of Mohsin Fani and the very strong Sikh tradition in this respect can not be very easily brushed aside. Jehangir has not given much space in his book to his dealings with the Guru, and has disposed it off only in a few lines. There is every possibility, rather a certainty that the information regarding Guru's torture was not sent to Jehangir at all, and that his order to put the Guru to death should also have been dealt with only in a casual manner in his book.

Not
correct

Sarkar

J. N. Sarkar agreeing that the Guru was tortured to death, seems to have gone to the extremity of haste and carelessness, when he says that "these were the usual punishments of revenue defaulters of those days."³ Writes Dr. Bannerji : "it appears that to call Guru Arjan a revenue defaulter because of his inability or refusal to pay the fine and then justify the tortures inflicted on him on grounds of current usage, ignoring all the other circumstances connected with his death, show a perversity of judgement, which can hardly be excused in a historian."⁴

Contra-
dicted

The sacrifice of Guru Arjan is a mile-stone in the history

1. *Dabistan*, Vol. I., pp. 72, 73.

2. Rogers and Beveridge, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 72, 73.

3. J. N. Sarkar, op. cit., p. 308.

4. I. B. Bannerji, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Vol. II, p. 6.

of the Sikhs. According to Dr. Trumpp: "Guru Arjan's death is the great turning point in the development of the Sikh community, as from that time the struggle commenced that changed the entire character of the reformatory religious movement."¹

Consequences

Trumpp

At the time of his death, Guru Arjan left the following message to be taken by his Sikhs to Hargobind: 'I have succeeded in effecting the object of my life. Go to my son the holy Hargobind, and give him from me ample consolation. Bid him not to mourn or indulge in unmanly lamentations but sing God's praises.....Let him sit fully armed on his throne, and maintain an army to the best of his ability. Let him affix the patch of Guruship to his forehead according to ancient custom, and ever treat his Sikhs with the utmost courtesy.'² Here was a revolution sown, which transformed the character of the Sikhs from mere saints, into saint-soldiers, who later challenged the mightiest of the Oriental empires, and who later rolled the flood of the never-ending foreign invasions across the river Indus.

A message

Revolution
sown

In a short time, after Guru Arjan's martyrdom, as Macauliffe writes, the Guru changed his character from a mere religious leader to a spiritual-cum-military leader. It was as a result of this that Guru Hargobind later began to raise an army, he gave martial tunes to the Sikhs to sing their songs upon, and took to hunting and physical exercises. Guru Arjan's martyrdom, writes Khazan Singh,³ inflamed the peaceful Sikh hearts. It set the ball rolling and started the spirit which later converted the ordinary 'hair-cutters and water-drawers' into the greatest of soldiers and generals of the time. The Sikhs burned with the spirit of revenge and prepared to learn the arts of swords and battle-fields.

Military
leader

Sikhs
inflamed

According to Latif: "The death of Guru Arjan is a great turning point in the history of the Sikh nation, for it inflamed the religious passion of the Sikhs, and it was at

1. Trumpp, *Adi Granth*, p. LXXXII.

2. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, iii, p. 99.

3. History and Philosophy of Sikh Religion, Vol. I.

Hatred of
Muslims

Chapter of
persecutions

New
tradition

Sikhism
consoli-
dated

this time that those seeds of hatred of the Musalman power were sown which took such deep root in the minds of all the faithful followers of Nanak."¹ The sacrifice also started in the Sikh history, the new chapter of Sikh persecutions. As the Sikh zeal to take a revenge strengthens, the wave of arrests, fines and threats to the Sikhs spreads. The more the effort is made to suppress them, the more the Sikhs burn with the fire of enthusiasm and sacrifice. A precedence had been set up, which was strengthened by the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur ; and which was converted into a tradition when the tenth Guru sacrificed whole of his home and hearth.

The greatest service rendered by the fifth Guru's sacrifice, however, was that it consolidated what the Sikhs had so far attained, and it separated the Sikhs definitely from the common mass of the Hindus. One of the causes of the Guru's sacrifice had been the hymns in the Granth which were supposed to be blasphemous of the Hindus, and which the Guru refused to erase. The sacrifice established a sort of Sikh distinction as a separate sect.

1. History of the Punjab, p. 254.

CHAPTER XI

THE ADI GRANTH

There existed three editions of the Adi Granth in the days of the Sikh Gurus, the first transcribed by Bhai Gur Das and dictated by Guru Arjan, the second by Banno, and the third prepared by Bhai Mani Singh under the supervision of Guru Gobind Singh. The first two are said to be still in existence, one at Kartarpur and the other till recently at Manjat in the Gujrat district of the Punjab. "The third and most complete edition was either destroyed or taken away by Ahmad Shah Durani when he despoiled the temple at Amritsar."¹ Regarding the origin of Bhai Banno's edition, different views are held. According to one view, Bhai Banno having learnt of the compilation of the Granth by Guru Arjan, went to see it, requested for a loan of it and copied it for himself; adding into it some verses excluded by Guru Arjan. According to another view, Guru Arjan entrusted the Granth to Banno to have it bound from Lahore, but he prepared an unauthorised copy of it¹. We here, however, are concerned mainly with the first edition compiled by Guru Arjan.

Three
editions

Banno's
edition

A—The Necessity for it

Regarding the circumstances under which it was written, thus writes Macauliffe: "Guru Arjan now felt the necessity of laying down rules for the guidance of his followers in the performance of their daily religious duties and expiratory rites. This course would reduce his religion to consistency, and hinder divergent tenets and rituals. That consummation, however, could only be attained when the exact words of the Gurus were permanently recorded in one grand volume."²

The rules

1. Payne, A Short History of the Sikhs, Appendix E, p. 237.

2. Macauliffe, Vol. III, p. 66.

Prithia's
activities

Moreover, there is said to have been another reason which necessitated its compilation. Prithia in the Sikh records is said to have started composing religious hymns of his own which he described as the compositions of Guru Nanak and his successors. And under these circumstances, if the compositions of the Sikh Gurus were to be saved from the bad attempts of such persons, it was necessary to collect them together in a compiled form, as :

“ਬਚਨ ਕੀਤਾ, ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਜੁਦਾ ਕਰੀਏ ।
ਮੀਟੇ ਪਾਠ ਲਗੇ ਨੀ ਰਲਾ, ਸੋ ਨਿਆਰੀ ਕਰ ਧਰੀਏ ।”

For inde-
pendence

And again, as according to Gordon, if the independence of the Sikh race was to be established, it was essential that they should have an independent source of religious inspiration. The Sikhs had been given a script and a language of their own, and they had to be given a definite literature in them, which could form a strong base for their development. That the Guru was really planning by such actions to establish the Sikhs as a separate sect or a race, as Gordon and some other writers say, we may not agree, yet there is every possibility that the existing sacred Hindu literature being in the Sanskrit language, the Guru should have thought it essential to give his followers a book in their own language, which could at once replace the Hindu Granths in their aim and purpose. Moreover, to keep the Sikhs above the existing corrupt socio-religious practices, Guru Amar Das also had left definite instructions in the twenty-third and twenty-fourth *pauris* of the Anand, that the real hymns of the Guru alone should be repeated and revered by the Sikhs, and for that Guru Arjan may have felt himself duty-bound to save these hymns from possible interpolations. Yet more so when by this time several hymns had already got currency among the Sikhs, which were supposed to have been composed by the Sikh Gurus but which actually they had not been. One of such hymns being :

Guru Amar
Das's
instructions

Spurious
hymns

1. See *Bansawali Nama*, Teja Singh Ganda Singh, 'A Short History of the Sikhs.'

‘ਨਾਮ ਖੁਮਾਰੀ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਚੜੀ ਰਹੇ ਦਿਨ ਰਾਤਿ ।’

There was by this time a rich treasure of hymns composed by Guru Arjan's predecessors, which were either in his own possession or in that of some other persons. The Guru's own work was also voluminous, and besides, the hymns of several other Bhaktas were also available. The Guru decided to bring all of them together in the shape of a Granth.

Rich
treasure

B—The Collection

The Guru seems to have faced a considerable trouble in the collection of the material for the Granth. Major portion of the hymns of Guru Nanak, Angad and Amar Das lay with Baba Mohan at Goindwal¹. Guru Arjan, according to Macauliffe, sent Bhai Gur Das to borrow these volumes from Baba Mohan for the purpose of copying them down; the latter, however, “had locked himself in his house, and was said to be intent on his devotions. Gur Das remained knocking at his door for a whole night, but failed to receive an answer².” Bhai Budha was after this sent. But he also after knocking the door for a long time and finding no response; broke open the door, to find that Mohan was in a state which simulated unconsciousness. On the advice of Mohri, Mohan's younger brother, Bhai Budha desisted from awakening the sleeper, and returned to Amritsar. After this the Guru went personally, but after finding no response to his calls, the Guru addressed Mohan with the following stanza :

From Baba
Mohan

Guru's
visit

“O Mohan, lofty is thy mansion and matchless thy palace ;

1. Where according to Teja Singh, Ganda Singh, the manuscript consisting of two volumes was with the descendants of Baba Mohan upto very recently, but now one “of them, bearing the date 1652 Bk. (1595 A. D.) is traceable to Ahiapur, a village in Hoshiarpur district, and other to a Sikh, named Baba Bhagat Singh, living in the Frontier Province.” Short History of the Sikhs (1950), p. 30.
2. Macauliffe, iii, pp. 55—56.

*O Mohan, saints adorn the doors of thy temple.
In the temple they ever sing the praises of the infinite and
merciful God.*

*Where the company of the saints assemble, there they
meditate on thee.*

*Show compassion and kindness, O compassionate Lord ;
be merciful to the poor.*

*Nanak representeth, I am thirsting for a sight of thee,
grant it to me, and all happiness shall be mine¹."*

Mohan or
God ?

On this Mohan softened and opened the door. This view is supported by majority of the Sikh writers. Professor Sahib Singh, however, has tried to contradict² it, saying that these hymns are addressed to God, or Mohan, the enchanter and not to Baba Mohan. But this view does not seem to be correct. The above mentioned song seems to be addressed to both Mohan and God, the former being expanded and replaced by God, as the song proceeds, as in the case of all such songs. The Guru's visit to Baba Mohan and his obtaining the above mentioned manuscript from him is completely confirmed from some other hymns in the Granth, which as we have no reason to disbelieve, were composed in the same connection. Thus for instance, in another stanza the Guru says :

The both

A proof

*"O Mohan, incomparable are thy words, and superior thy
deportment.*

*O Mohan, thou believest in one God, all others thou
treatest as refuse."³*

And when the Guru did obtain the manuscript from him he uttered the concluding stanza :

"O Mohan, mayest thou be successful with thy family !

*O Mohan, thy children, friends, brethren, and family,
all hast thou saved.*

*Thou hast also saved those who having beheld thee have
dispelled their pride.*

Death never approacheth those who magnify Thee.

1. Macauliffe, iii. p. 56.

2. See his '*Kuj Hor Dharmik Lekh*'.

3. Macauliffe, iii, pp. 56-57.

*Endless are Thine excellences ; they cannot be described,
O True Guru, and Supreme God.*

*Nanak representeth, Thou has preserved a prop by
clinging to which the world shall be saved¹."*

It is clear thus that if Mohan were to mean only God, the Guru would not say : "*thou believest in one God, all others thou treatest as refuse.*" Nor would the Guru give the blessing : "*O Mohan, mayest thou be successful with thy family.*" From the concluding stanza it is also clear that Mohan and God have both been addressed, the word Mohan being expanded and magnified, as the song proceeds.

Conclusion

After obtaining the hymns of the first three Gurus, the Guru added to them the hymns of his father, the fourth Guru, which were in his own possession. Then the hymns of different Bhaktas were collected. The suggestion of some Sikh writers, that since almost all these Bhaktas had died, their spirits were called by the Guru to give the correct form of the hymns, may be treated as absurd. Teja Singh Ganda Singh hold that the Guru had inherited from his predecessors the hymns of the *Bhaktas* such as Kabir and Farid, to which he added the hymns of others which he obtained from the followers of their respective sect. Macauliffe also holds the similar view, and says : "*It may be here conceded that those hymns received some alterations in the process of transmission from the saints to their followers who were contemporaries of Guru Arjan ; and this will explain why so many Panjabi words are found in the Bhagats' writings, and why they differ from their compositions preserved in other parts of India.*"²

Bhaktas'
hymnsHow
obtained ?

That Guru Nanak and his successors did have in their possession the hymns of Kabir and Farid many further be proved from the fact that many of the expressions of these Bhaktas are embodied in the expressions of the Gurus. Teja Singh Ganda Singh may here be quoted in this connection : "*'Sutak will enter into our kitchens' (Var Asa) is found*

Possessed
themAn
argument

1. *Gauri Chhant*, after Macauliffe, iii, pp. 57—58.

2. Macauliffe, iii, p. 61.

also in Kabir's Gauri. 'The mind is born out of the five senses' occurring in Guru Nanak's Asa is the same as 'The mind is the creature of the five senses' of Kabir's Gauri..... Some couplets of Farid are embodied in the writings of Guru Nanak (e. g. 113 and 114). Sometimes the Guru criticises Farid's views and inserts his own shlokas after his (e. g. 119—120 and 123—124). See also Farid's Suhi (ii) and Guru Nanak's reply to it in the same ghar 6 (ii).'' And again they write : "A similar identity or correspondence in expression is found between Second, Third and Fourth Gurus, on the one hand, and Farid and Kabir, on the other. This could only be explained by the supposition that the predecessors of Guru Arjan had before them the writings of these Bhagats¹."

Those
rejected

When Kahna, Chhaju, Shah Hussain, and Pilo, the four religious men of Lahore learnt that the Guru was compiling the Granth, they requested the Guru to find a place in his Granth for their compositions. A reference may here be made to their rejected compositions which would incidentally show what the Guru would not like Sikhism to be. Kahna thus delivered his composition—

Kahna

"I am He, I am He

*Whom the Veds and Purans sing, but Whom none hath
found by search."*

Chhaju

The Guru rejected this composition as rank blasphemy. Chhaju then offered his composition—

*"Look thou not on woman, even though she be cut out of
paper ;*

*Like a plundering band of Baloches she will take thee
away and kill thee."*

Shah
Hussain

This was rejected as being too derogatory to the female sex. According to Guru Nanak, domestic life was the best of all, and he had no wish to depreciate women. Shah Hussain's composition was—

1. Short History of the Sikhs, p. 3.

*"Be silent; O my friend, be silent ;
There is no necessity, O my friend, for speaking ;
My friend, there is no necessity for speaking."*

This was rejected because the Guru said that so long as one remained in the world, he must exchange his views with others, and if one be a holy man he should preach the message of God among the people. Lastly, Pilo submitted:

Pilo

*"They who have died at their birth are superior to us ;
They do not thrust their feet into the mire, and are not
befouled therewith."*

This was rejected on the ground that better is the man who struggles with the world to make his life profitable than he who quits the scene at the outset.¹

C—The Authors

The Granth thus compiled by Guru Arjan consists of the *Shalokas*, *Shabads* and the *Pauris* etc. of the first five Gurus as follows. To Guru Nanak belong 974 of these compositions, to Guru Angad belong 62, to Guru Amar Das 907, to Guru Ram Das 679 and to Guru Arjan 2216. Thus the greatest contribution is that of Guru Arjan himself. Afterwards 116 *Shabads* and 2 *Shalokas* of Guru Teg Bahadur were added to it, and only one line was added to it belonging to the tenth Guru, which according to Trumpp and Munshi Sohan Lal formed a reply to his father's letter addressed to him from the prison at Delhi, but which is of very doubtful origin.

The Gurus

The sixteen Hindu and Muslim *Bhaktas* whose hymns were included in the Granth were : Kabir, Farid, Trilochan, Beni, Ramdas, Dhana, Namdev, Jai Dev, Bhikhan, Sein, Pipa, Rama Nand, Parma Nand, Sadhna and Sur Das.

Sixteen
Bhaktas

A hymn of Mira Bai is preserved in Bhai Banno's edition, but it is not found in the first edition of Guru Arjan. The compositions of 15 *Bhattas* or minstrels are included in the Granth. These 15 minstrels are : Bhalhau, Bhika, Ball, Ganga, Haribans, Jallau, Jalap, Kal, Kalas, Kalashar, Kirat, Mathura,

The
minstrels

1. Macauliffe, iii, pp. 62—63.

Fanciful ? Nal, Rad, and Sal. All these *Bhats*, according to *Panth Prakash*, are Brahmins. Cunningham, however, writes that the number of these *Bhats* was nine, and adds : "The names are evidently fanciful, and perhaps fictitious. In the book called the *Guru Bilas* eight *Bhats* only are enumerated, all the names except Ball are different from those in the Granth."¹

Satta and Balwand The Granth includes the *Var* written by Satta and Balwand. Satta who visited Guru Ram Das, came and completed the *Var* started by Balwand, by adding a few verses in praise of Guru Arjan. 'Sach Nam di bani', written by Sundar, the nephew of Guru Amar Das is also included, and the Granth includes three *Shabdas* supposed to be written by Murdana, but which are of doubtful origin.

Hindu influence "It would thus appear," writes Dr. Narang, "that 75 percent of the authors of the Granth were Hindus by faith, as well as by birth if, of course, the Gurus themselves are to be regarded as Sikhs and not as Hindus."²

D—Arrangement of the Matter

Japji is first The Granth as compiled by Guru Arjan starts with the 'Japji', or 'Japji Sahib', as the Sikhs call it, also called as *Guru Mantr*. It occupies seven pages and consists of 40 sections of irregular lengths, called *Pauris*. Written by Guru Nanak, "the mode of composition implies the presence of a questioner and an answerer, and the Sikhs believe the questioner to have been the disciple Angad." writes Cunningham.³ The *Japji* is repeated by the Sikhs every morning. Next follows the '*Sodar Reh Ras*', the evening prayer, which occupies 3½ pages. This was also composed by Guru Nanak, but later on additions to it were made by Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan. Cunningham writes : "Sudar, a particular kind of verse ; Rah, admonisher ; Ras, the expression used for the play or recitative of Krishna. It is sometime corruptly called the 'Rowh Ras,' from Rowh, the Punjabi for a road."⁴

1. History of the Punjab, p. 325.

2. Transformation of Sikhism, Appendix 1, p. 337

3. Cunningham, Appendix XVII.

4. Ibid.

The meaning drawn by Cunningham for *Sodar*, however, does not seem to be correct. *Sodar* means 'that door', as it is implied in the very first sentence of the hymn, when it says :

Where is that door of Thine
Where is that house of Thine
From where Thou controleth every thing.

After it follows '*So Purakh*', which means 'that Supreme Being', and this is also recited with the evening prayer. Then '*Kirtan Sohila*', which is recited in the night before going to rest, and which occupies one page and one or two lines more. It was also composed by Guru Nanak, but Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan added some verses to it. *Kirtan* follows from the word *Kirti*, which means praise. *Sohila* stands for a rejoicing song.

Next portion of the Granth, and which constitutes its central body, is divided into 31 sections, each according to a particular *raga*. The thirty-one *ragas*, or musical measures used are :

Sri Rag, Majh, Gauri, Asa, Gujri, Dev Gandhari, Bihagra, Wadhans, Sorath, Dhanasri, Jai Sri, Todi, Bairari, Tilang, Sudhi, Bilawal, Gaund, Ramkali, Nat Narayan, Mali Gaura, Maru, Tukhari, Kedara, Bhairon, Besant, Sarang, Malhar, Manhra, Kalian, Parbhati and *Jai Jaiwanti*. Whole of this central portion occupies 1,154 pages. The musical measures such as *Megh* and *Hindol* or *Jog* and *Deepak*, which work the mind to the extremes of joy or sadness are purposely excluded to keep moderation. Each of these sections begins with an invocation to God and then follow the hymns of the Gurus in order of their succession, each one of whom calls himself by the common appellation of Nanak, and is distinguished only by the words in the beginning such as *Mehla 1, Mehla 2, Mehla 3* and so on. After it in each section, follow the hymns of the *Bhaktas* or the Saints, beginning with Kabir and ending with Farid, if there be any hymn from him.

So Purakh

Kirtan
Sohila

Central
body

31 sections

Moderation
kept
Gurus'
hymns

Bhaktas'

- Minstrels
Miscellany
Epilogue
Pride
Self-abasement
Rag Mala
Controversy
- Towards the end are given the *Sawayyas* of the minstrels, "who admirably sum up the characteristics of the different Gurus. After a miscellany of *shloks* left over from insertion in the *Vars*, the Book closes with an epilogue, called *Mundavani*, in which the author says :
- "In this dish are placed three things :
Truth, Harmony and Wisdom.
These are seasoned with the Name of God which is the
ground of all.
Whoever eats and enjoys it will be saved.*
- And then he adds with a genuine pride in the work he has accomplished for the regeneration of mankind :
- "It is a thing you cannot afford to ignore ;
You must clasp it to your hearts¹."*
- And after this, as if from self-abasement, the Guru writes :
- "I did not appreciate what Thou didst for me, and yet Thou
madest me worthy.
I am full of demerits ; I possess no merit, and yet Thou
Thyself hast compassion on me.
Thou showest compassion and kindness unto me ; I have
found the true Guru, the friend.
Nanak, if I obtain the Name, I shall live, and my body
and soul shall be refreshed."²*
- The Granth concludes with the *Rag Mala*, which is a part of the work separately available of a Mahomedan poet, called Alim, which consists of 353 stanzas, and purports to be an account of the loves of Madhava Nal and a lady called Kam Kandala. Alam's work is supposed to have been written in 1583, and the *Rag Mala*, which extends from the sixty-third to its seventy-second stanza, contains a list of *ragas* and *raginis* and their subdivisions. There is a controversy whether the *Rag Mala* forms an essential part of the Granth at all. Because the *ragas* mentioned in it do not

1. See Teja Singh Ganda Singh, pp. 32—33.

2. Macauliffe, iii, p. 64.

correspond to those thirty-one in the *Granth*, nor do we know how it was included in the sacred volume.

The *Granth* was completed and installed in the *Hari-mandir* at Amritsar in 1604, and Baba Budha was appointed the first *Granthi*, to be the in-charge of it. The *Granth* was brought to its final shape by Guru Gobind Singh who added into it the hymns of Guru Teg Bahadur, and one of his own, the origin of which is supposed to be controversial.

Completed
1604

Guru
Gobind
added

E—The Nature of Contents and its Importance

The *Adi Granth* of Guru Arjan is supposed to be the first religious work in which all the racial and national differences have been set aside. The list of the authors in the *Granth* consists of persons belonging to various communities and to different parts of the country. When Akbar saw it, he remarked that the *Granth* was "the greatest book of synthesis, worthy of reverence."¹

No differ-
ences

The subject of discussion in the *Granth* is : true shape of Truthfulness, how to attain it, those who have attained it and those who have not attained it. Dr. Trumpp writes : "Prayer to the Supreme is hardly ever mentioned in the *Granth*"² But comments Dr. Narang : "The statement is simply absurd, and literally hundreds of prayers to the Supreme could be produced from the book³." The *Granth* in fact starts with a prayer to the Supreme, invokes God in every passage of its body, and ends with a prayer to him. And Dr. Trumpp's words simply prove what Professor Max Muller said about the untrustworthiness of his account. In the *Granth*, continues Dr. Narang, "there is absolutely no dissertation on any particular subject and no stories of Guru's lives or miracles."⁴ Its main part consists only of songs in praise of God and prayers to Him.

The
subject

Prayer to
Supreme

Absurd

Dr. Trumpp's complain of repetitions in the *Adi Granth*

Repetitions

1. *Ain-i-Akbari*
2. Trumpp, *Adi Granth*.
3. Narang, G. C., p. 341.
4. *Ibid.*

proves further his failure to put himself in tune with their spiritual significance. He has perhaps brought "too intellectual an outlook on the ecstatic and spontaneous outpourings of a highly charged emotional quality. Hence for him, the repetitions were just repetitions."¹ Macauliffe writes : "It is intelligible that repetitions should be found in the sacred books of several religions. For the teachings of their prophets were orally addressed to crowds who clustered round them and repetitions served to impress on the listeners the instructions accorded."² He further elucidates the point : "The cardinal principle for the Gurus and Bhagats whose writings find place in the sacred books of the Sikhs was the unity of God. This is everywhere inculcated in the Sikh sacred writings with ample and perhaps not unnecessary iteration, considering the forces Sikhism had to contend with in an age of ignorance and superstition."³

The facts

Lack of
order

Dr. Trumpp further complains of a lack of order and classification in the Granth. But writes Dr. Narang, the Granth resembles Rig Veda in this "with this difference that whereas the Veda generally deals with the same subject in the same stanza, the Granth does not confine itself to any particular subject even in one stanza." But since there are no personal lives, or miraculous powers discussed in it, "the very nature of the contents of the Granth could not, therefore, yield to any rigid classification based upon a community or similarity of the subject dealt withthe teachings of the Gurus about morality, as well as their doctrines and beliefs, lie scattered all over the book, and must be gathered by a careful study of the whole volume." And further writes Dr. Narang : "Being a collection of so many authors, uniformity of belief or theological doctrine could not be expected."⁴

High
merits

The Granth, if we approach it dispassionately, has in fact merits which are too high for a common intelligence to grasp.

1. Giani Harnam Singh, '*Sri Guru Granth Sahib*,' p. VII

2. The Sikh Religion, Vol. I, p. XVII.

3. The Sikh Religion, Vol. I, p. 1.

4. Transformation of Sikhism, pp. 339—40.

Leaving aside its religious philosophy, its literary excellence itself is so high that it would attract every person of that bend of mind. "The writing in the Adi Granth," writes Khushwant Singh, "is the best that Punjabi literature has hitherto achieved. It has a form and finish not equalled by subsequent writers. The beauty of its composition has a powerful appeal!" The Granth is a treasure of Indian languages, as Dr. Trumpp writes. There are some stanzas in it, such as those of Jai Dev, which are very much like *Sanskrit*. One or two stanzas are in pure *Persian*. Nam Dev and Trilochan, belonging to the Deccan, have a strong impress of *Marathi* on their contributions. Contributions of Kabir and Ramanand are in pure *Hindi* of the time, which, along with the Punjabi of those times, forms the medium of expression for the main body of the Granth. Pure *Punjabi* is thus represented in the typical songs in the tradition of Farid :

Treasure of Languages

Pure Punjabi

ਚਾਰੇ ਕੁੰਡਾ ਢੁਢੀਆ ਕੋ ਨੀਮੀ ਮੈਡਾ ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸਾਹਿਬਾ ਤੂ ਮੈ ਹਓ ਤੈਡਾ ।

Or

ਜੇ ਭੁਲੀ ਜੇ ਚੁਕੀ ਸਾਈਂ ਭੀ ਤਰਿੰਜੀ ਕਾਢੀਆ ।

We have in it, the words of *Sindhi* as ਗਰਹੜ, ਜੁਮਨਹਾਰ; and those of *Lehndi*, such as ਮੇਕੂ, ਘਿਨਾ and ਵੰਜਨ ।

Sindhi
Lehndi

If a literary work is to be defined as the one in which one gets a show of beauty and tastefulness,² the Granth which has both is one of the greatest literary works ever produced. A tide of pure love with the Invisible One is perceptible when we read for instance that one should love Him as fish love water, and without which they cannot remain alive :

Great literary work

Pure love

ਰੇ ਮਨ ਐਸੀ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉਂ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕਰ. ਜੇਸੇ ਮਛਲੀ ਨੀਰ ।

ਬਿਨ ਜਲ ਘੜੀ ਨਾ ਜੀਵਈ, ਪਰਭ ਜਾਣੈ ਅਭਿ ਪੀਰ ।

Some of its lines and verses are important, more for their beauty than for their meaning, as :

Beauty

1. The Sikhs, p. 165.

2. See Dr. Gopal Singh, '*Punjabi Sahit Da Itas*', pp. 85 etc.

ਭਿੰਨੀ ਰੈਨੜੀਆ ਚਮਕਣ ਤਾਰੇ ।

Or

ਚਿੜੀ ਚੁਹਕੀ ਪੋਹ ਫੁਟੀ, ਵਗਣ ਬਹੁਤ ਰਰੰਗ ।

Different
types
Symbols

Different types in poetry are used such as, *Bara Mahan*, *Ghorian* and *Arti*. The symbols used in the Granth betray as to how vast a knowledge the authors possessed regarding nature and their surroundings. As for instance, a verse compares the useless search of mind to one's wandering in the jungles, while patience (ਘਰ) is compared to the greenness of woods :

ਕਿਆ ਜੰਗਲ ਢੂੰਡੀ ਜਾਏ ਮੈ ਘਰ ਬਣ ਹਰਿਆਵਲਾ ।

Black stag

And again addressing the man as a black stag :

ਤੂੰ ਸੁਣ ਹਿਰਣਾ ਕਾਲਿਆ, ਕੀ ਵਾੜੀਏ ਰਾਤਾ ਰਾਮ ।

ਬਿਖ ਫਲ ਮੀਠਾ ਚਾਰ ਦਿਨ, ਫਿਰ ਹੋਵੇ ਰਾਤਾ ਰਾਮ ।

Restrictive

Restrictive in words, yet so pierce and expressive of the deepest meaning, the Granth has yet another literary excellence in it, as :

ਮਨ ਹਾਲੀ ਕਿਰਸਾਣੀ ਕਰਨੀ, ਸਰਮ ਪਾਣੀ ਤਨ ਖੇਤ ।

ਨਾਮ ਬੀਜ, ਸੰਤੋਖ, ਸੁਹਾਗਾ, ਰਖ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਵੇਸ ।

Proverbs

Its restrictive use of language has, further, added many new proverbs into the Punjabi language, such as, '*Pain works as a cure, while happiness does as a disease*'—in hapiness one forgets Him :

ਦੁਖ ਦਾਰੂ ਸੁਖ ਰੋਗ ਭਇਆ ।

And again :

'*Conquest of mind is the conquest of the world.*'

ਮਨ ਜੀਤੇ ਜਗ ਜੀਤ ।

Carried
forward

"Guru Nanak," thus writes Dr. Mohan Singh Dewana, "lived from A. D. 1469 to 1538 ; his literary and religious tradition was continued till 1708 when Guru Gobind Singh expired at Nander in Hyderabad." And during this period : "In Punjabi.....the tradition of religious, lyrical, romantic—legendry and balladic output were carried forward by the House of Nanak, primarily and primely, by and a host of

Hindu Muslim saints who owed their efflatu direct to Nanak and Farid and their spiritual successors¹." The great literary qualities of Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan may here be specially discussed.

Regarding Guru Nanak, Khushwant Singh thus beautifully explains : "Most didactic poetry suffers from a cramping narrowness imposed by the purpose for which it is written, but Guru Nanak's poetry displays a remarkable freedom of expression." "The beauty of pastoral Punjab, the ripening cornfields, the break of dawn and the awakening of birds, the graceful flight of deer in the woodlands, the majesty of monsoon clouds and the music of rainfall, all aroused him to religious and poetic frenzy."² Peculiarities of the joint Hindu families, relations between husband and wife and other such domestic situations work as simile for Guru Nanak ; and his metaphors are drawn from the picking of cotton and gleaning of corn, milking of cattle and churning of butter, spinning and weaving.

Guru
Nanak's

Free
expression

Poetic
frenzy

Simile

Metaphors

Thus he says comparing spouse with God :

*"Accursed is her life who is separated from her spouse ;
she is ruined by mammon.*

*Like a wall impregnated with kallar she crumbleth down
day and night."*³

And :

*"Nanak, by spinning falsehood the web of falsehood is
woven.*

*False is the cloth therefrom and its measurement ; false
the raiment and the pride thereof."*⁴

In Guru Nanak's poetry there is frankness, directness, simplicity and humility. He understands all the measures of the folk-music, and can use all the types of poetry and important forms of verse, such as *Chhant*, *Dupade*, *Chaupde*, *Bara Manh* and *Salok*. All the important details of the Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist cultural and religious vocabulary are available in his hymns. He knows all the different types of

Frankness

Music

Verses

All
vocabulary

1. Dr. Mohan Singh, 'A History of Punjabi Literature', p. 23.

2. Khushwant Singh, p. 163.

3. Macauliffe, i, p. 262.

4. Ibid, p. 345.

Mysticism mysticism, such as the mysticism of detached action (ਨਿਸ਼ਕਾਮ ਕਰਮ), of emotion (ਪ੍ਰੇਮ), of *yoga*, nature and soul. In his poetry the Buddhist sense of humanity has reached its best form ; and he displays the *Vedantic* freedom, Muslim solidarity and co-operation and the Sikh socio-political justice in the most lucid manner. Cosmic humour, eternal joy (ਅਨੰਦ), the decided preference for the life of a householder, and avoidance of polemics, rabid denunciation and raliocination, are his special traits. With him the language of militarism, religionism, trade and travel has come to acquire peculiar universalism of its own.

Humour
Householder
Avoidance

Guru Arjan

The attainments of Guru Arjan in this respect, too, are high. "His verse abounds with jewelled phrases and has a haunting melody produced by the use of alliteration and repetition of words," thus writes Khushwant Singh.¹ Being an inhabitant of the Majha and known far and wide, poets and writers came to him from far off places, and seem to have influenced his knowledge of different languages, which shows many aspects. It is a wonder indeed that Guru Arjan knew not only main but the details even of the sub-languages² of the Punjab. An instance of his pure *Punjabi* is :

ਬਿਰਖੈ ਹੇਠ ਸਭਿ ਸੰਤ ਇਕਠੈ,
ਇਕਿ ਤਤੇ ਇਕ ਬੋਲਨ ਮਿਠੇ ।
ਅਸਤੁ ਉਦੇਤ ਭਇਆ ਉਠ ਚਲੇ,
ਜਿਉ ਜਿਉ ਅਉਧ ਵਿਹਾਣੀਆ ।

His capability and hold on different languages is manifest in *Jaitsari ki Var*, where he uses as many as three languages of the time.

ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੰਤ ਏਕੋ ਨਨੀਅੰਤ ਏਕੋ ਵਰਤੰਤ ਏਕੋ ਨਰਹਰਾ ।
ਨਾਮ ਦਾਨ ਜੰਚੇਤਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਇਆਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਹ ।੧।
ਹਿਕੁ ਸੇਵੀ ਹਿਕੁ ਸੇਮਲ ਹਰਿ ਇਕਸੁ ਪਹਿ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ।

Three in one

1. The Sikhs, p. 165.

2. See Surinder Singh Kohli and Surinder Singh Uppal, '*Punjabi Sahit Bave*', pp. 100—108.

ਨਾਮ ਵਖਰ ਧਨੁ ਸੰਚਿਆ, ਨਾਨਕ ਸਚੀ ਰਾਸਿ ।੨।

ਪੜਿਤੀ—ਪ੍ਰਭ ਦਇਆਲ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਪੂਰਨ ਇਕ ਦੇਹੁ ।

ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਦਜਾ ਕਹਾ ਕੇਹੁ ।੩।

The study of Guru Arjan's compositions reveals not only his knowledge of different sub-languages, it reveals also his mastery over different poetic styles. Thus he uses the *Chhant* and *Pehra* styles in *Sri Rag* ; *Baramahan* and *Din Raine* in *Rag Majh* ; *Thiti* in *Rag Gauri* ; *Birhari* in *Rag Asa* ; *Jaitsri* in *Rag Gujri* ; *Maru* (a *Var*) in *Ramkali* and *Birhare* and *Din Raine* in *Rag Maru*.¹ His hymns being composed in *Ragas* or musical measures, they have definite and regular composition. Number of lines have also been duly calculated. In every *Pada*, there are generally two sentences² ; where two *Padas* are used, the composition is known as *Dupde*, where three are used it is known as *Tipde* and similarly where sixteen are used it is *Suhile*. The *Chhants* used are further, of different kinds, such as *Dohra*, *Chaupai*, *Chhapai*, *Phunch*, *Chaubles*, *Swaya*, *Jhulna* and *Sorath* etc.

Poetic
styles

The Padas

Chhants

Guru Arjan's similes and metaphors also reveal his vast knowledge of and love for nature and agriculturist's life. High meanings are conveyed in simple similes concerned with the life of the masses. Thus :

Similie

"Mouths without the Name are empty
Like husks devoid of grain."³

Domestic life and qualities of a good husband and wife etc. are also fully drawn upon to bring home the meanings of the Guru's teachings, as :

Domestic
life

1. Chhant and Saloka are in praise, but without any limitation. In Pehre, Baramahan, Bawan Akhri and Thiti, names of months, letters and dates must be mentioned in the beginning of every *Pada*. In var, Pauri is used.
2. Though on page 204, in *Rag Gauri Purbi*, the first hymn has a *pada* of only one sentence.
3. Macauliffe, iii, p. 145.

"God hath given me possession of the household ; I have become the housewife.

My Spouse hath made the ten organs of action and reflection my slaves.

I have put together all the things of the house, And with thirsty desire I long for my Beloved.

What merits of my beloved Spouse shall I mention ?

He is the wise, handsome, and compassionate God.

I have put on chastity as my ornaments and applied the fear of God as a pigment to mine eyes.

I chew the ambrosial Name as my betel ;

My bracelets, my dress, mine ornaments admirably become me.

*A woman obtaineth all happiness if her Beloved go to her house."*¹

Gurus
superior

The poetry of the Sikh Gurus in the Granth is far superior to that of the *Bhaktas*, in its freedom from insipid repetition, imagery, ordonnance and harmonies, in its far greater emotion, and its lesser doctrinality, riper scholarship and altogether wider contemplative and descriptive sweep.²

Political
conditions

The Adi Granth of Guru Arjan "is nowhere narrative or historical," says Cunningham. Yet it throws ample light on social, political, religious and economic life of the age. Corruption of the Lodhi rule, the destruction brought about by Babur's invasions, the battles and the military weapons etc.; have been mentioned by Guru Nanak, as :

"There was a contest between the Mughals and Pathans ; the sword was wielded in the battle.

*One side aimed and discharged their guns, the other also handled their weapons."*³

Social life

In the social life, the family relations, customs and ceremonies performed at birth, marriage and death, the evils of *Sati*, *Purdah* and widow are all mentioned, and it has been

1. Macauliffe, iii, pp. 388-89.

2. See Dr. Mohan Singh, 'A History of Punjabi Literature', pp. 23-53.

3. Dr. Sher Singh, 'Philosophy of Sikhism.'

shown that the practice of prostitution existed, as the verse says :

*"The prostitute sins without hesitation,
She commits adultery without shame."*¹

Games and amusements, such as dancing, acrobatics, and singing ; the musical instruments such as drum, flute, *rebeck*, *Shehnai* and *Timbourine* etc. ; articles of dress and ornaments such as jacket, coat, skirt, shoes, blanket, ear-rings, and necklace etc, are all mentioned. People wore turban and respected it, as :

ਮੈਂ ਭੋਲਾਵਾ ਪੱਗ ਦਾ, ਮਤ ਮੈਲੀ ਹੋਇ ਜਾਏ ।

Some wore moustache and beard and kept long hair, as it says :

ਸਿਰ ਪਲਿਆ, ਦਾੜੀ ਪਲੀ, ਮੁਛਾਂ ਵੀ ਪਲੀਆਂ

Different articles of diet used by the people are mentioned as. milk, rice, wheat, pulses, butter, butter-milk, sugar, sweets and garlic etc. Some people took meat and wine, the fruits such as grapes and mangoes. Buttered bread of rich and dry of poor.

Religious practices of the people and general degradation in their religious life are referred to in their details. As for instance :

Religious
practices

*"One man calls on Rama, on Khuda another,
One implores Gosayan, to Allah other pray ;
Some bathe at tirths and other visit Mecca,
Some engage in puja and some perform salat,
Some read the Veds, the Quran some others,
Some affirm them Hindus, some say Musulmans,
Some look to swarga and others to the Garden,
But he fulfils the will of God, saith Nanak,
Who knows God in the secret of True Name."*²

We also can manufacture an account of the economic life from references to it given at different places in the Granth. The Granth refers to the means of irrigation, to

Economic
life

1. Guru Arjan, *Rag Bhairo*.
2. Archer, *The Sikhs*, p. 166.

trade, weights and measures, and to carts and boats as means of communication. It refers to agricultural practices, pastoral pursuits and different professions such as weaving and spinning. Different terms such as, financier, counterfeit goods, capital, interest, cobbler, weaver, peasant, *bunya*, diamond, ruby, kauri, gold and silver; they all refer to the economic practices of the people. The economic standard of the people can well be judged from the requirements of Dhanna, after meeting which he would get perfect satisfaction. He says :

Best
require-
ments

"O God, I Thine afflicted servant come to Thee :
Thou arranst the affairs of those who perform Thy
service.
Dal, flour, and ghi I beg of Thee
So shall my heart be ever happy.
Shoes and good clothes,
The seven sorts of corn, I beg of Thee.
Milch cows and buffaloes I beg ;
A good Turkistani mare,
And a good wife,
The slave Dhanna beggeth of Thee."¹

Old
historical

We also come across old historical references in the Granth, such as *Vishnu*, the creator of *Maya*, who has a quoit in hand, thousand eyes, and is lover of *Lakshmi*.

Scientific

We have references in it to the discoveries later made by science, such as, that moon has no light of its own and that life started first in water.

The
importance

Importance of the Granth lies in the fact that whereas we learn of the philosophy of socrates only from Plato and Xeno Pher ; of the philosophy of Christ from Methew and John ; whereas Budha and Confuscious have left no original record of their teachings ; the philosophy of the Sikh Gurus is preserved in such secure and original form, and under the locks of poetical metres that it is well nigh impossible to adulterate or deform it.

Original

Its importance to the Sikhs, as already referred

1. Macauliffe, Vol. vi.

to, can hardly be exaggerated. Although in philosophy it is nothing more than the old wine in new bottles, yet it has given to the Sikhs something separate to draw their inspiration from. It gives them their rules of conduct of life and helps them effectively in establishing their entity distinct from the general mass of Hindus. It also gives them unity of religious aim and social purpose.

To the
Sikhs

In this *Granth*, the old complicated philosophy has been brought out in its simpler and purer form, within the understanding of a common man in the street. And its general importance was realised by the Guru himself when he said that the time would come when it would be translated into different languages and people would be attracted towards it in great numbers. Thus he wrote :

General
importance

ਸੰਸਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਅਰ ਤੁਰਕਨ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ।
ਇਸ ਮੇਂ ਲਿਖ ਲੇਵਹਿ ਬੁਧਿ ਰਾਸ਼ਾ ।
ਸਭ ਉਪਰ ਪਸਰੇ ਇਮ ਮਾਹੀ ।
ਜਿਮ ਜਲ ਪਰ ਸੁ ਚਿਕਨਤਾ ਪਾਈ ।

CHAPTER XII

GURU HARGOBIND

Succeeded
in 1606

We already have had a short account of the early life of Guru Hargobind in a previous chapter. When Guru Arjan sacrificed his life in 1606, Hargobind was just a lad of eleven years. The dying message which the father had left for his son was : "Let my son sit fully armed on his throne and maintain an army to the best of his ability." And the lad himself is said to have realised at that young age that the times had now changed, and if the Sikh religion was to continue its existence, Sikhs, the saints, had to be converted into saint-soldiers. Some Sikh records show the Guru having delivered a fiery speech at the time of his pontification, in which he declared that henceforward the best offering to him would be a good youth, arms and horses. His best pleasure would be exercises, duels, horse-riding and huntings. His poets would now inspire the people with poems of heroic deeds, and his musicians would sing the Sikh hearts into martial inspiration. He asked the Sikhs to raise fire in their breasts, and not to fear that their number was small. For, he said, only a small spark of fire could burn the whole jungle to ashes. "According to the Sikh chronicler the Guru rained instructions like clouds in *Sawan*, and the Sikhs flourished under it like thirsty rice-fields."¹

Fiery
speech

A—The Changes

Changed
mode

At the time of the Guru's pontification, Bhai Budha clothed Guru Hargobind in new raiment, and placed before him a *Seli*—a woollen cord worn as a necklace or twisted round the head by the former Gurus—and a turban, as appurtenance of his calling. Guru Hargobind ordered that

1. Macauliffe, iv, p. 7.

the *Seli* should be placed in the treasury, apparently because it was not suited to the altered political conditions of the Sikhs. And he addressed that 'my *Seli* shall be sword-belt, and I shall wear my turban with a royal aigrette.' He then sent for his arms, and arrayed himself in martial style so that, as the Sikh chronicler states, his splendour shone like sun.¹

Guru Hargobind seems to have been seriously effected by his father's sacrifice and his dying message, and it changed the entire course of his life. As a writer says: "Arjan trafficked as a merchant, and played his part as a priest in affairs of policy; but Har Gobind grasped a sword, and marched with his devoted followers among the troops of the empire, or boldly led them to oppose and overcome provincial governors or personal enemies." But this does not mean, as it was not so regarding his father, that Guru Hargobind left off the religious pursuits. Besides teaching honest and prayerful life of the first five Gurus, Guru Hargobind taught his Sikhs the Manu's principles of self defence. The Sikhs began to be trained in the use of arms and disciplined in the arts and habits of soldiers. The Guru himself started wearing a military dress, with two swords, one on the left and the other on the right, and when asked he explained, the one sword represented *Miri*, or his temporal power, while the other represented *Piri* or his spiritual power.

Principles
of self-
defence

Miri and
Piri

The Guru issued proclamations to the *Masands* that they should encourage the Sikhs to make him the offerings of the weapons of war and horses. Several warriors and wrestlers, writes Macauliffe, hearing of the Guru's fame came to him for service. He enrolled as his body-guards fifty-two heroes who burned for the fray. A nucleus was thus formed, and soon the number of recruits began to rise. Five hundred youths came from the countries of Manjha and Malwa and offered their lives to him for mere two meals a day, a new uniform every half a year and the religious instructions to enlighten their souls. The five hundred enlisted in the

Procla-
mations to
Masands

Recruit-
ment

1. Macauliffe, iv, p. 2.

beginning were divided into five troops of one hundred each, and Bidhi Chand, Pirana, Jetha, Piara and Langaha were made the captains, one of each¹. The total establishment of the Guru rose further and according to Cunningham² and Archer³, the Guru developed a stable of 800 horse. Three hundred mounted followers were constantly kept in attendance as body-guards, sixty matchlock-men secured his safety, and the trumpeters, dogs of the best pedigree, and domesticated lions studded his new military set up. According to Mohsin Fani, 2500 volunteers remained ever ready to lay down their lives, and besides there was the special regiment of Pathans under the command of Painside Khan.

Total
2,500

When the people wondered how the Guru would be able to maintain such a large army, the Guru quoted from Guru Arjan :

The sub-
sistence

"God putteth their food even before the insects which He created in rocks and stones;

*He provideth every one with his daily food; O man, why art thou afraid ?"*⁴

Renegades
and crimi-
nals

Majority of the Guru's regiment of Pathans, is said to have consisted of the Mughal renegades, who not getting regular payment of salaries, deserted the Mughal army and recruited themselves with the Guru. Some writers criticise the Guru that he recruited into his small army even the worst criminals and highway men. Although majority of the Sikh writers deny it, according to Dr. Bannerji the hope of booty and plunder must have attracted many, though "it would be too much to expect that this could be true in majority of cases."⁵ But seeing the character and the mission which the Guru carried, a better explanation would perhaps be that these criminals and highway men should have renounced the life of loot and

The expla-
nation

1. Macauliffe, iv, p. 4.
2. History of the Sikhs.
3. The Sikhs.
4. Macauliffe, iv, pp. 4-5.
5. I. B. Bannerji, Evolution of the Khalsa, Vol. II.

plunder, and should have changed under the Guru's influence from robbers into the fighters for the right cause; for the Guru offered no good prospects to the former. It is a fact that Bidhi Chand, a notorious robber did join the Guru's forces, but after this we do not hear of him having shed an innocent blood.

The Guru also introduced several changes in his own habits and in those of his followers. He systematically turned his attention to the chase. He rose before day-break, bathed, dressed himself in full armour, and then went to the Har Mandar to worship, and preach to the Sikhs. After this, breakfast was distributed indiscriminately to his troops and followers as they sat in rows for the purpose. After taking rest for about an hour, the Guru prepared for the chase. Accompanied by an army of forest beaters, hounds, tame leopards, and hawks of every variety, he used to sally forth and traverse long distances¹. Though disputed by some, contrary to the practice of the preceding Gurus, he became a flesh eater, and the Sikhs imitated him.

The central temple of Amritsar, or the Har Mandar had so far been the only place where the Guru addressed his Sikhs and conducted their affairs. But now a new building was constructed a few paces beyond, where on a raised platform, he began to attend regularly to the Sikh temporal affairs. Regarding this writes Archer: "He completed a shrine which Arjan had begun, the *Akal Takht*, or "throne of the Timeless."² Khazan Singh calls it *Akalbunga*, or the house of God. The use to which this new building was put, introduced considerable change in the Sikh character and organisation. Here the Guru sat like a king and administered justice to the Sikhs. Here also he accepted offerings and checked the accounts of the *Masands*. Duels were fought below and the Guru enjoyed them from here. Here the Guru also told his Sikhs the heroic tales and prepared their minds for the heroic deeds. According to some

Turned to
chase

The life

Akal Takht
constructed

Its use

1. Macauliffe, iv, p. 5.

2. The Sikhs, p. 174.

writers there was a definite purpose in the Guru's building of the '*Akal Takht*', just opposite the Har Mandar. The former was connected with Sikh politics, while the latter with religion, and each was visible from the other place, so that when they were in the *Akal Takht*, they should not forget their religion, while they were in the Har Mandar, they should not forget their politics. Or in other words, it was the blending of the Sikh politics with the Sikh religion. And writes Khazan Singh: "He said that as long as he continued in Harmandar, he should be reckoned as a saint and in Akalbunga he should be looked upon as a king."¹ And with all this development the Sikhs actually stopped looking towards Delhi. They felt they had their own kingdom, with Guru Hargobind as their king, nay the '*Sachcha Padshah*' or the 'True King' as against the false kings of the Mughals.

Saint and
a politi-
cian

Amritsar
fortified

Lohgarh
built

Dhad
singing

Night
singing

Bhai
Budha
trained

The Guru also fortified his possessions. A wall was constructed around the city of Amritsar, and a fort was constructed in it and named Lohgarh. In the fort the arms were collected and the military preparations went ahead.

The special type of *Dhad* singing on the martial tunes is also said to have been started for the first time by Guru Hargobind. The special *Dhadis* or the bards, such as Abdul and Natha Mal were appointed to sing heroic stories on the martial tunes. The *Asa-di-Var* began to be sung two times every morning, first by the rebeck players inside the Har Mandar, and then by the *Dhadis* in the *Akal Takht*. In the night, singing the hymns from the *Granth* with raised voices, and with alight torches in their hands, the Sikhs walked round the Har Mandar and energised their spirits. This system, again, is said to have been started for the first time by Guru Hargobind. And in all this, write Teja Singh Ganda Singh, the Guru himself being yet young, was trained by Bhai Budha as according to the instructions of Guru Arjan.²

1. History and Philosophy of Sikh Religion, Vol. I, p. 127.

2. A Short History of the Sikhs.

Such activities of the Guru raised a new spirit among the Sikhs. They prepared, as if, for a great venture in the making. But some people began to raise doubts in their minds that the Guru was leaving the peaceful pursuits of his predecessors, and getting power-drunk. He was trying, as if, to realise some of his materialistic ends. This change in the Guru's policy has been commented upon variously even by some modern writers. Arnold Toynbee, a world-famous historian, remarks thus: Sikhism "fell from its religious height into a political trough, because the Sikh Gurus, Hargovind and Govind Singh.....succumbed to the temptation to use force."¹ And further he comments that this 'downfall' of Sikhism was used by a clever militant Hindu reaction against the Mughal Empire, as its instrument.²

The doubts

Toynbee's view

But both these conclusions of Arnold Toynbee seem to be based on his misconception of the essentials of the Sikh Religion. In fact by having a resort to the sword, the Sikh Guru's neither fell from some high principles of spiritual thought, nor did they permit themselves to be used unduly as a tool by some clever militant Hindu reaction against the Mughal Empire. The Sikh religion started as a protest against corruption in the Hindu religious thought, against political depravity of the ruling classes; and it declared, right from the beginning, that war was a perfectly legitimate and permissible activity, both, as a measure of national policy and as an individual activity expressing itself in the use of force and employment of violence. Secondly, war and violence were to be resorted to as a means and not as an end. And thirdly, the use of force was to be resorted to as a last choice, when all other peaceful means of solving the problems had failed. And when a war was fought for a right cause, for the protection of justice of beliefs and practices, and for the protection of one's honour and integrity, Guru Nanak declared: "it is the privilege and right of the true

A misconception

The arguments

1. A Historian's Approach to Religion (Oxford, 1956), p. 110.

2. Ibid, pp. 112-123.

War last
resort

men to fight for, and die of righteousness." Guru Gobind Singh also prayed to the Almighty for blessings so that he "should die fighting for a right cause in the battlefield." Force and violence are not *per se* evil, and Guru Gobind Singh remarked in the second epistle of his *Zafarnamah* that the hand may legitimately move to the hilt of the sword, only when all other peaceful means have failed: '*Chun dast az hamch hilte darguzasht, halal ast burdan b-shamshir dast.*' And there is no doubt that in the case of the Sikh Gurus, the peaceful means had been tried by them to their utter most possibility. But when they failed, the sword had to be resorted to.

Appeals to
Mata
Ganga,
Gurdas and
Budha

Be that as it may, not understanding the true import of the change in the Guru's policy, some of Guru Hargobind's contemporaries went to Mata Ganga, the Guru's mother, and appealed to her to ask the Guru to desist from the wrong path he had adopted; as that might entail upon him and his followers, the wrath of the Mughal authorities. Similar appeals were made to Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Budha, and Bhai Budha in some records is actually said to have gone to persuade the Guru. But if it is correct that Guru Hargobind was doing all that under the training of Bhai Budha, the fact of his having gone to the Guru for this purpose ill-matches with it. Bhai Gurdas's reaction to such approaches which continued to be made to him even after the Guru's imprisonment and release, is signified in following of his verses:

Views of
Gurdas

*"People say the former Gurus used to sit in the temple ;
the present Guru remaineth not in any one place.*

*The former Emperors used to visit the former Gurus ; the
present Guru was sent into fortress by the Emperor.*

*In former times the Guru's darbar could not contain the
sect ; the present Guru leadeth a roving life and
feareth nobody.*

*The former Gurus sitting on their thrones used to console
the Sikhs ; the present Guru keepeth dogs and
hunteth.*

The former Gurus used to compose hymns, listen to them, and sing them ; the present Guru composeth not hymns, or listeneth to them, or singeth them."¹

But in order to justify the Guru's change in the policy under the peculiar circumstances, Bhai Gurdas writes again :

"Just as one has to tie pail's neck while taking out water, to get Mani snake is to be killed. To get Kasturi from deer's neck, deer is to be killed. To get oil, til is to be crushed.

To get kernel pomegranate is to be broken. Similarly to correct senseless people, sword has to be taken up.

The change in the policy was in fact the only course open to the Guru, and if he had not done that, the Sikhs should have fallen back as saints, meditants and friars, to be absorbed into the great ocean of the Hindu beliefs.

The justification

Only course

B—The Imprisonment

The Guru, however, could not continue his war-like practices for a long time. For he was soon imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior, for which different reasons have been forwarded. Archer gives a very strange account of it and says that there "is some evidence that the Guru himself was once captured by a band of irregulars, whether they were Sikhs or Rajputs, and was detained by them in Gwalior fortress until a fine was paid for his release."² The fortress to which Archer refers was however neither in the possession of Rajputs, nor of Sikhs. And Archer's absurdity of having written the account without getting it confirmed from reliable sources is proved from the fact that Bhai Gurdas himself in the above quoted verse confirms that the Guru was imprisoned in that fort by the Mughal Emperor.

Archer's view wrong

Chandu's part

The Sikh accounts assert that after the Guru's pontification, Chandu once again requested the Guru to accept the hand of his daughter, whose youth was being wasted as she could be married to none else in the circumstances. The Guru

1. Macauliffe, iv, pp. 76—77.

The Sikhs (1946) p. 173.

having refused, Chandu began to plan troubles for him at Delhi. Once when the emperor Jehangir had fallen seriously ill, he called in some astrologers to advise him on the manner he could restore his health. Chandu bribed the astrologers to say that Jehangir's disease could be cured by the penance of some holy man in the fort of Gwalior, and Guru Hargobind was recommended for the purpose. Jehangir gave in and ordered the Guru to be imprisoned in that fort. This account, however, writes Dr. Bannerji, "presents more of fable than of history."

A fable

Embezzlement

Mis-interpretation

Some accounts say that Guru Hargobind was for some time in the service of the Emperor, acting as a commander of his forces in the Punjab. Cunningham basing his account on the utterly irrelevant translation of a passage from *Dabistan* by Captain Troyer, writes that the Guru became "involved in difficulties with the Emperor about retaining for himself that money which he should have disbursed to his troops."¹ Or as Mohamad Akbar writes, the Guru was imprisoned on charge of embezzlement of some money. But Macauliffe giving the passage of *Dabistan* in original Persian, remarks: "Here there is not one word about money due to the army, about Hargobind's criminal misappropriation, or about his having carried his sword against his father (As Troyer writes). The translation of the passage is this: 'He had many difficulties to contend with. One of them was, that he adopted the style of a soldier, wore a sword contrary to the custom of his father, maintained a retinue, and began to follow the chase. The Emperor in order to extort from him the balance of the fine which had been imposed on Arjan Mal, sent him to Gualiar.'"²

True cause

The account of *Dabistan*, as translated by Macauliffe seems to be more correct regarding the reason for the Guru's imprisonment. Though—if we agree that Chandu paid the fine and purchased Guru Arjan's person to realise from him

1. History of the Sikhs

2. Mohd. Akbar, The Punjab Under the Mughals, pp. 193-94.

3. Macauliffe, iv, pp. 21-22 (Foot Note).

the amount as he desired, as some Sikh records assert—it is difficult to believe that the Emperor imprisoned the Guru for the fine which Chandu had already paid in his father's behalf, yet there can be no doubt that the Guru's war-like preparations should not have been taken kindly by the authorities, and as according to Beni Prasad, Jehangir does seem to have been under the influence of some of the Guru's enemies ; the Guru might have been sent to the fort. This seems to be supported by Bhai Gurdas as well who in the already quoted verses writes. *"The former Emperors used to sit in the temple ; the present Guru was sent into the fortress by the Emperor,"* and this the Emperor did, definitely because : *"The former Gurus sitting on their thrones used to console the Sikhs ; the present Guru keepeth dogs and hunteth,"* and does other things like that. We might agree with Payne that "so much did his royal state and military array alarm Jehangir that he was seized and imprisoned in the Gwalior fortress."¹

Military
preparations

Gurdas
supports

C—The period

The next question that arises is regarding the period for which the Guru was imprisoned, Gordon² writes that the Guru was imprisoned for twelve years by Jehangir, and was released only in the time of Shah Jehan. But according to Mohsin Fani, the Guru was on friendly terms with Jehangir and was in his employment towards the close of the latter's life. Therefore the Guru must have been imprisoned and released in the time of Jehangir. Mohsin Fani also writes that the Guru remained in the fort for twelve years. But Dr. Bannerji forwards some very potent arguments to prove that this might be a mis-print in Mohsin Fani's book. Since Jehangir died in 1627 and the Guru succeeded to the pontificate in 1606, if the Guru was imprisoned for twelve years, we must find a gap of that period in his activities during the period of 21 years *i. e.* from 1606 to 1627. And since the

Twelve
years

Arguments
against

1. A Short History of the Sikhs. Latif in 'History of the Punjab' and Gough in 'The Sikhs and the Sikh Wars', also support this view.
2. The Sikhs.

Guru was on friendly relations with Jehangir towards the close of his life, he could not have been put in the jail later than 1614. But we know that the Guru excavated Kaulsar tank in the name of Kaulan in 1621. According to Macauliffe, Baba Atal Rai, the Guru's son by Nanaki was born in 1620. Before this the Guru had passed some of his time with Faujdar Yar Khan. Ani Rai, the the third son of the Guru was born in 1618, Suraj Mal, the second son was born in 1617, and Baba Gurditta the eldest son was born in 1613. Thus there is no gap of 12 years in the Guru's life between 1614 and 1626, during which he might have been in the jail. The opinion of some writers that the Guru was summoned to Delhi in 1616, also does not seem tenable. For we know that Jehangir left Agra in 1613 to establish his court and camp at Ajmer for his operations against Mewar. Jehangir left Mewar in November, 1616, and entered Mandu in March 1617. Then he turned to Gujrat and returned to Agra only in April, 1619.

Not sum-
moned in
1616

Unaccount-
ed for
period

There is, however, a period of about 5 years, from 1607 to 1612, which has to be accounted for in respect to his activities. If Macauliffe is correct that the Guru was married to Nanaki only a short time before the birth of Gurditta in 1613, then the question arises that the Guru having succeeded to the pontificate in 1606, why was his marriage postponed till that time. The argument that Nanaki was then too young, may not perhaps carry some weight, because we know that the practice of child-marriage obtained, and that when the hand of Chandu's daughter, who also should have been a bit younger, or at the most of the age of Hargobind, was offered for him much before his pontificate, she was considered to be of quite ripe age so that her parents felt immediate necessity of seeking a bride-groom for her. Moreover, even if Nanaki was young, according to the prevailing custom, it was not essential that the bride should go and live with the bride-groom immediately after her marriage; and unless there should have been some serious reason, the mother of the Guru should not have postponed

the marriage till that late. Obviously, writes Dr. Bannerji, the serious reason must have been his internment in the Gwalior fort, where probably he remained for five years *i. e.* from 1607 to 1612.

5 years
imprison-
ment

But here we might introduce one more argument. If the Guru was seized due to his war-like activities, he must have carried such activities to a considerable length before he was arrested. We must, therefore, allow atleast two or even three years for his preparations, so that they should be of magnitude sufficiently high as to move the Mughal authorities against him. Thus if we permit two years on this score, the Guru should have been imprisoned for about four years in 1608, and if we permit three years, he should have been in the fort for about three years from 1609 to 1612.

Another
argument

Three or
four

The view of some Sikh writers that the Guru was imprisoned for forty days, while that of some others that he was imprisoned for over two months, may not at all be tenable for the reason that the incidents which are said to have occurred during the Guru's imprisonment, are so varied that they cannot all be compressed within the space of either of these short periods.

Not forty
days

Nor two
months

D—The Release

Regarding the release of the Guru, again, Macauliffe says that Bhai Jetha, a pious Sikh went on a mission to Delhi to secure the Guru's release. He succeeded in soothing the Emperor, who had been troubled with fearful visions, and thus obtained the orders for the Guru's release¹. In the meanwhile, according to Dr. Narang, Mian Mir also interceded in behalf of the Guru, and it had a desired effect upon the emperor². Wazir Khan, a Mughal noble also pleaded in his behalf, and so long as the Guru remained in the fort, the fort became a place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs, who organised night processions with torches in their hands, and bowed before the walls of the fort and touched their fore-

Jetha's part

Mian Mir

Wazir Khan

Sikh
processions

1. See Macauliffe, iv, pp. 24—27.

2. Transformation of Sikhism, p. 83.

heads with the soil below. Writes Cunningham : "They flocked to Gwalior, and bowed themselves before the walls which restrained their persecuted Guru, till at last the prince, moved, perhaps, as much by superstition as by pity released him from confinement."¹

The Guru, however, when confronted with the order of his release, refused to leave the fort so long as the fifty-two kings who had been imprisoned there as hostages of millions of money, and with whose release there was supposed to be a danger of their inciting rebellion ; were not released along with him. The Guru stood surety for their loyal behaviour and the Emperor, who seems by this time to have been thoroughly educated regarding the Guru's merit, and regarding the perfidy of Chandu who had been instrumental in poisoning his ears against the Guru, ordered the release of these kings as well. Because of this reason the Guru is mentioned in the Sikh records as '*Bandi Chhor Baba*'—the noble man who secures freedom to others from confinement

The victory of the Guru seems to have been complete. The Guru was called to the Emperor's presence, who expressed his regret over what had happened and "made over Chandu, as was the custom at that time, to the Guru for punishment," writes Macauliffe. The Emperor also sent for Chandu's wife and son, and made them over to the Guru ; the Guru, however, said that the most severe punishment to them would be that they should see Chandu's sufferings. After this, on "a signal from the Guru, Bhai Bidhi Chand and Bhai Jeha seized Chandu, led him outside the fort, took off his turban, tied his hands behind his back, and showered blows of slippers on his devoted head. While being thus castigated he was led through the streets of the city, a warning to all men. He was pelted with stones, mud, and filth, and several people spat on his face. He had said that he would attack the Guru like a mad dog, and his threat recoiled on himself.....The Sikhs bound him, and made him over to pariahs as if he were a dog. Dirt and filth continued to be

1. History of the Sikhs.

poured on him, and he was reduced to a condition in which no one could recognize him. When his wife and son had seen his treatment, they were allowed to depart. Everybody congratulated the Guru on the mercy he had shown."¹ Finally somebody stabbed Chandu to death, and thus closes one chapter of the Guru's life.

Stabbed

E—The Friendly Relations

After this there followed a period of friendly relations between the Guru and the Emperor, and in the meanwhile the Guru's military preparations went apace. Dr. Trumpp expresses astonishment that the Mughal authorities were either too shortsighted or indolent or too powerless to stop effectively the concourse of such a turbulent and dangerous growth.¹ But in fact the Guru seems to have been too clever for them. He continued his friendly relations with the Mughals, and under that cover he found time enough to carry on his military preparations.

Indolent

During this period, the Guru also gave due attention to the religious activities. He undertook several tours of different parts of the country. Once, leaving Amritsar, the Guru proceeded on a preaching tour towards Kartarpur. He visited several adjoining villages and stayed at Kartarpur for about seven months. After visiting Mukerian and Hargobindpur, and after having recruited many able bodied persons into his army, the Guru returned to Amritsar. Jehangir is also said in the Sikh records to have visited the Guru once at Amritsar, and offered the Guru some pecuniary aid in his building activities, which he politely refused.

Religious
tours

Jehangir's
visit

The Guru received an intimation that a pious *Udasi* Sikh, Almast, who had been preaching the Sikh religion at Gorakhmata, the place which after Guru Nanak's visit had begun to be called Nanakmata, was being persecuted by some *Jogis*, who after ousting him from the shrine, were preparing to destroy the *pipal* tree under which Guru Nanak had held

To
Nanakmata

1. Macauliffe, iv, p. 30.

2. *Adi Granth*, p. LXXXIV.

discussions with the followers of Gorakh Nath. The Guru went there personally and restored order, and organised regular preaching work under Almast. The incident however insignificant shows how the Guru's influence spread far and wide.

Visited
Srinagar

The Guru also visited Srinagar at the call of some Sikhs and that of an old lady Bhag Bhari who had no eye-sight. He proceeded thither through Sialkot, Malotia, Wazirabad, Mirpur, Bhimber and Behram etc. He also met there Bhai Sewa Das who had been carrying on the preaching work for sometime, and then went to Bhag Bhari, whose eye-sight is said to have been restored. There is now a Sikh *Gurdwara* at the place where Mai Bhag Bhari used to live. After a short stay at Srinagar, the Guru proceeded to Baramula, Uri, Muzaffarabad, and then to Gujrat. At Gujrat the Guru met a Mohammedan saint, Shah Daula, with whom he stayed for some time and discussed with him the change he had introduced in his practices. From Gujrat the Guru came back to Amritsar.

At Gujrat

Relation
with
Mughals

Some Sikh writers assert that the Guru went to Kashmir accompanied by Jehangir, but there is no strong evidence in support of this assertion. We also do not get a reliable account regarding the type of relations with Jehangir the Guru had. The more important Sikh records are silent about it. But *Panth Prakash* and *Itihas Guru Khalsa* write that the Guru was appointed a supervisor over the Punjab officials and was put in command of 700 horse, 1,000 foot and 7 guns. He is also said to have subdued raja Tara Chand of Nalagarh at the request of the Emperor.¹

Tuzuk
silent

We however, cannot place our full reliance upon such accounts. *Tuzuk-i-Jehangiri* in which Jehangir gives an account of his officers and in which even some trivial events are discussed in detail, does not mention even the name of the Guru. Some Sikh writers, however, reject the idea that the Guru was in the Emperor's employ at all. They say that

1. Khazan Singh, History and Philosophy of Sikh Religion, Vol. I., p. 130.

he had friendly relations with Jehangir and accompanied him on a tour to Kashmir and Rajputana and on some of the Emperor's expeditions, as a friend.

Mohsin Fani, the contemporary writer says : "Hargobind was always attached to the stirrup of the victorious Jehangir," and "after Jehangir's death was attached, in some capacity or the other, to the Mughal Government." From this Dr. Bannerji has concluded that the Guru's position in the Emperor's employ seems to have been just minor. The detached study of the character of the Guru, however, makes it difficult for us to believe that the Guru should have accepted some paid employment under the Government at all. It is however possible that he should have acted as an advisor to the high Government officials in one capacity or the other.

Mohsin
Fani's view

Detached
study

Whatever it be, there is no doubt that after the Gurus' release from the fort, his friendly relations continued with the Emperor Jehangir till his death.

F—The Open Hostilities

The friendly relations between the Guru and the Mughals could not continue for a long time. The Guru's enemies seem always to have been at work against him. Prithia died just before the death of Guru Arjan. But his son Mehrban succeeded him in his hostile activities against Guru Hargobind, just as the Guru succeeded his father to the pontificate. On the other hand after the death of Chandu, his son Karam Chand took up his father's mission for the Guru's destruction. Both of the Guru's enemies exchanged their turbans as a mark of life-long friendship. They, together with some other persons jealous of the Guru's position, tried to poison the ears of Jehangir, but having failed there, they turned to the Khuro's Durbar, who at the time was Governor of Ajmer and the adjacent provinces. Just as they succeeded in poisoning Jehangir's ears in the time of Akbar, they succeeded in poisoning the ears of Khuram, the heir-apparent when Jehangir was in power ; and according to Macauliffe, when Khuram succeeded to power as Shah Jehan after the

The Causes

Mehrban
and Karam
friends

Khuram's
ears poi-
soned

A fanatic

death of his father Jehangir, he remembered many forged stories against the Guru. Moreover Shah Jehan himself was an orthodox Muslim, whose reign from 1727 to 1757, represented religious fanaticism at its considerable height. *Badshanama*, a contemporary work, tells us that Shah Jehan ordered the destruction of all temples which were under construction and had not yet been completed. The famous *baoli* of Guru Arjan at Lahore was also filled up, and in its place a mosque was constructed. This should naturally have annoyed the Sikhs. It is also said to have been proclaimed that in future there would be no conversions from Islam, and this also went against the Sikh interests.

Kaulan's
Case

A view

There was another cause which considerably embittered the feelings between the Guru and the Mughal authorities. Different views are forwarded regarding Kaulan's connections with the Guru. Some Sikh accounts say that a *Masand* named Sujan was bringing a beautiful horse for the Guru from Kabul. The horse was forcibly captured by an imperial officer, who presented it to the Emperor. The Emperor, however conferred it on Kazi Rustam Khan of Lahore, from whom the Guru recovered it forcibly and along with that abducted his daughter, Kaulan, regarding whom, says Macauliffe, Bhai Budha had already made a prophecy and said that the Guru would one day become the Kazi's son-in-law. This story of the Guru's abduction of Kaulan may however be rejected out-right. For, Mohsin Fani, who in order to judge the Guru's character, makes so close an observation of him as to see whether the Guru while discharging his arrows, brings some feeling of anger on his face or not, must have made a reference to it if the Guru had any illicit relations with Kaulan. Moreover the tradition of the personal characters which the Gurus enjoyed, forbids us to believe the story which some orthodox Sikh writers seem to have forwarded to magnify the Guru under their own standard of the things, but which is nothing short of a slur upon his character.

No
abductionOther
views

Some other accounts say that Kaulan, the Kazi's daughter, hearing stories regarding the Guru and his religion

from Abdulla Shah, a disciple of Mian Mir, was converted to this view and used to sing the Sikh hymns, for which her father began to ill-treat her, and she, under the advice of Mian Mir, escaped to the protection of the Guru, where she was treated with respect and given every opportunity for her spiritual development. Dr. G. C. Narang, Cunningham, and Giani Lal Singh hold that she was simply a concubine of the Kazi. She originally was Hindu, as her name Kaulan (lotus) signifies, and was forcibly abducted by the Kazi, but later escaped to the Guru, the champion of the Hindu religion. *Tarikh-i-Punjab* calls her merely a maid-servant of the Kazi.

Whatever be the details of the fact, there is no doubt that Kaulan, a Muslim lady did come under the influence of the Sikh religion. The fact must have been reported to the Emperor, who already having issued the proclamation against the Muslims being converted to other faiths, should have been considerably antagonised against the Guru, thus contributing to the hostilities between the two.

Emperor
antagonised

Besides, the increasing power of the Guru, his taking into his service of a large number of soldiers, including Pathan mercenaries and the Mughal deserters, could not have failed in arousing suspicion in the minds of the Provincial authorities regarding the actual character of the Guru. Dr. Trumpp writes: "As the Guru's expeditions were nearly always directed against the Mohammedans and the extortionate provincial authorities, we need not wonder that his popularity fast increased with the ill-treated Hindu rural population; every fugitive or oppressed man took refuge in his camp, where he was sure to be welcomed without being much troubled about religion, and the charms of a vagrant life and the hope of booty attracted numbers of warlike Jats, who willingly acknowledged him as their Guru, the more so as he allowed his followers to eat all kinds of flesh, that of cow excepted."¹

Recruit-
ments

Guru's
expeditions

As a result of all these developments, a stage seems to have been set, munition was supplied and only a spark was

A stage set

1. *Adi Granth*, p. LXXXIV.

needed. The slightest cause could be sufficient to explode the magazine. And this is what actually happened.

Battle of
Amritsar

Immediate
cause

The battle

House
plundered

One day, in 1628, the Emperor went ahunting to a place known as Gumtala, which was situated where now the district courts of Amritsar stand. The Guru was also incidentally occupied in the similar pursuits at that place. Here one of the Emperor's hawks came flying after a victim. Moved by compassion, the Sikhs set their own hawk on it and the Emperor's hawk was brought down. Khazan Singh says the Emperor's hawk itself came to the Guru,¹ as if to seek refuge. The Emperor's soldiers came to recover it, but the Sikhs refused to return. The Emperor being naturally enraged, writes Khazan Singh, sent Gulam Rasul Khan with 7,000 soldiers against the Guru, but he being defeated, Mukhlis Khan was next sent with 15,000 troops. But the latter too faced nothing but discomfiture, at which the Emperor being further enraged, he was preparing to send another expedition against the Guru when he was dissuaded by the Lahore Governor, Wazir Khan, who said nothing would come out from this.² Other accounts, however, say that only one expedition was sent under Mukhlis Khan, with 700 soldiers. According to Mohsin Fani, the Mughal forces plundered the city and looted the Guru's property as well. The second view seems to be curiously corroborated by a Sikh account that a Sikh detachment in the Lohgarh being too small, was destroyed by the Mohammedans; the next day being fixed for the marriage of Bibi Viro, the Guru's daughter, a lot of sweets had been stored in the fort, which the Muslim soldiers ate to their fill and fell to deep sleep. The Sikhs finding an opportunity, fell upon them and slaughtered great many of them, the rest having fled away. It makes atleast this much certain that the Emperor's forces were not defeated in the manner as Khazan Singh writes. They did plunder the Guru's house, and it is possible that they should also have suffered a heavy loss, just as the Sikhs did. That the

1. History and Philosophy of Sikh Religion, Vol. I, p. 133.

2. Ibid.

Sikhs' was not a complete victory seems to be further confirmed from the fact that the Guru now left Amritsar and moved towards Kartarpur, as the Sikh accounts say. Mohsin Fani writes that the Guru now fled to Kartarpur, which again does not seem to be correct. For had the Guru fled, Kartarpur was not far away, and the Mughals could have followed him up. It seems, a sort of balance was kept, neither side being completely defeated, nor victorious.

Guru to
Kartarpur

At Hargobindpur the Guru fought another battle with the Mughal soldiers, in 1630. It is said that one Bhagwana, a relation of Chandu Lal, had mis-appropriated some of the Guru's property. Bhagwana was killed by the Sikhs, but Rattan Chand, his son, appealed to Abdulla Khan, the *faujdar* of the Jullundur Doab, who marched upon the Sikhs with his soldiers, but was completely defeated and fled from the field. The battle however does not seem to be very significant, because we do not get even a mention of it in many accounts.

Battle of
Hargobind-
pur

Shortly after, however, the Guru had to measure swords with the imperial forces once again. It is said that two *Masands* Bakht Mal and Tara Chand were bringing two horses for the Guru, when their horses were seized by the imperial officers and sent to the Emperor. Sikh accounts give us interesting stories how Bidhi Chand, formerly a notorious robber, recovered them one by one from the Emperor's stable. The first time he went there and got a service in the stable, and getting an opportunity, he disappeared with the horse. The second time he appeared as an astrologer and deceived his way into the stable once again, disappearing with the second horse shortly after. Thereupon an army under the command of Lala Beg and Kamar Beg was sent to chastise the Guru. When the Guru learnt of it, he retired towards the Bathinda wastes, south of the Sutlej, where at a village known as Lehira, the battle was fought in 1631. Here the imperial forces seem to have been completely routed by the Sikhs. It was a great victory for the Guru. He having moved into the wastes first, is

Battle of
Lehira

Horses
seized

Recovered

Mughals
attacked

said to have been in an advantageous position. Macauliffe writes : "The Guru's army was so disposed round the only tank in the area that when the enemy arrived they could not obtain access to its water, and thus must inevitably perish from thirst."¹ The total number of soldiers killed on both the sides was 1200. This account of the complete victory of the Guru seems to be confirmed further from the fact that the Guru now returned to the plains and came back to Kartarpur,

Defeated

Battle of
Kartarpur

Painda
Khan

Kartarpur
invaded

A duel

At Kartarpur the third of the battles with the imperial forces was fought. Painda Khan, regarding whom Cunningham writes that his mother being a nurse of the Guru, he rose to a high position in the Guru's service, but according to Macauliffe, he was a Pathan mercenary; fell out with the Guru. Painda Khan had served the Guru faithfully for a considerable time, but later on, having developed a pride in his strength and capability,² he fell out with the Guru, and joined the imperial forces. There he prevailed upon the Emperor and a strong imperial force was sent under the joint command of Painda Khan and Kala Khan, the brother of Mukhlis Khan, which invaded Kartarpur. The Guru also had made his preparations, and his forces were commanded by Bhais, Gurditta and Bidhi Chand. As the action was being fought, Cunningham says, a man rushed with his sword upon the Guru and wielded it against him. The Guru, however, parried it and with another stroke severed his head saying : "Not so, but thus, is the sword used." The Guru, as if, was performing his teaching duties even in the battlefield. After this, it is said, Painda Khan challenged the Guru in a duel, the Guru accepted the challenge. Painda Khan was however defeated, and he fell down seriously wounded. Just as he was dying, the Guru protected his face with his shield against the scorching rays of sun and asked him to repeat the *Kalma*. Painda Khan, however, in a regretful attitude replied that the Guru's sword was his *Kalma*, and died. Kale

1. Macauliffe, iv, p. 179.

2. See Narang, p. 111; Cunningham, p. 58.

Khan was also killed, and the fact of the Guru's complete victory is confirmed by Mohsin Fani.¹ This battle was fought in 1634.

Guru's
victory

After this considering his resources slender, the Guru decided to retire from active hostilities to the Mughals. He came to Phagwara, but writes Macauliffe, as "the town was on the road to Lahore, whence reinforcement could easily be sent against him, he continued his march to Kiratpur."² And thus ends another chapter in the life of Guru Hargobind, a chapter of active hostilities against the Mughals.

Retired to
Kiratpur

G—The Last Ten Years

Kiratpur, a place where God's praises are ever sung, is said to have been visited by Guru Nanak. Situated at the base of the Kehlur mountain, the place presents a beautiful site for those given to worship and meditations. Baba Gurditta, the eldest son of Guru Hargobind built this city where the Guru spent his last days. Here with the exception of one event in 1642, in which the Guru helped Raja Tara Chand against the Nawab of Rupar,³ he lived a life of peace, devotion and propaganda. The enmity between the Guru and the Emperor is also said to have been removed shortly after, as a result of the advice of Wazir Khan to the latter, and the Guru had no anxiety to face from this side.⁴

At Kiratpur

One action

Peaceful

The Guru now completely diverted his attention towards the propaganda work. Gurditta was given a special assignment for the purpose, and he together with Almast, Phul, Gonda and Balu Hasna, who worked under him, carried on the preaching work effectively. Bhai Bidhi Chand was sent to preach in Bengal, while Bhai Gurdas was asked to make Kabul as his preaching centre. The Guru is also said to have converted the rulers of Kangra and Pilibhit.

Propaganda

Rajas
converted

1. *Dabistan*, Vol II, p. 275.

2. *Panth Parhash*, p. 119; Macauliffe, iv, p. 213.

3. Khazan Sfngh, *History and Philosophy of Sikh Religion*, Vol. I, p. 139.

4. Macauliffe, iv, pp. 315-316.

Guru Amar Das had converted the *Raja* of Hirapur while the *Rajas* of Kulu, Suket, Chamba and Haripura had been converted by Guru Arjan. These hill states, thus writes *Panth Parkash*, became the strongholds of Sikhism. Sikhism, however, does not seem to have survived there for a long time after the death of the Guru, for we have always known these *rajas* as only staunch Hindus.

Domestic
troubles

Gurditta

Dhir Mal

Deaths

Har Rai
successor

In his domestic life, the Guru had to face certain troubles during this period. Gurditta had been a very faithful son to the Guru, but his desire to marry the daughter of a Sikh named Naghura not being liked by the Guru, although the son bowed to the father's wishes, it did arouse some bitterness.¹ He is also said to have incurred his father's displeasure due to his performance of a miracle, in which to save one of his Sikhs from the wrath of some shepherds whose cow the Sikh had accidentally shot, he had to restore the animal to life. When the Guru showed his anger, Macauliffe writes, Gurditta circumambulated the Guru in token of offering himself as a sacrifice to him and departed for Budhan Shah's shrine, where he died. This happened in 1638.² Dhir Mal, Gurditta's son had proved to be another Prithia, as the Guru himself had prophesied. He remained at Kartarpur, where he appropriated to himself the Guru's property and refused to part with the original copy of the Granth with the delusion that it could perhaps get him Guruship. When after repeated invitations he did visit Kartarpur, he showed an arrogant attitude towards the Guru.³ Atal Rai, another son of the Guru had died young due to the similar reason as Gurditta. The Guru's first wife, Damodari died in 1631, and his second wife, Marwahi, died shortly after the death of Gurditta. All this must have made the last years of the Guru's life less peaceful.

As the Guru's end approached, he appointed Har Rai, the second son of Gurditta as his successor. Bhai Bhana the son of, Bhai Budha who had died, affixed the tilak to Har

1. *Dabistan*, ii, pp. 281-82.

2. Macauliffe, iv, 220-21.

3. *Ibid*, pp. 221-23.

Rai's forehead and decorated him with a necklace of flowers. The Guru died in 1645, on the testimony of the author of the *Dabistan-i-Mazahab*, who according to Macauliffe, seems to have been present at the Guru's death. When the Guru's body was borne on a beautiful bier for cremation, the Sikhs sang the following hymn from the Sukhmani :

Died 1645

*"He who knoweth God must always be happy,
And God will blend him with Himself.*

*.....
The object of his coming was
That through him the Name might be remembered.
He was saved himself and he saved the world :
To him, Nanak, I ever make obeisance."*¹

H—A General Estimate

In the end we may have a general survey of Guru Hargobind's activities and achievements. There has been a lot of misunderstanding regarding his activities, both among the modern writers as well as among the contemporaries of the Guru. The general complaints against the Guru are, firstly, as Dr. Trumpp writes, where as his predecessors were great men of religion and composed many hymns for the guidance of their Sikhs, Guru Hargobind did not compose even a single such hymn for the purpose. Then, instead of staying at home and looking after the religious problems of the Sikhs, the Guru idled away his time in hunting and other such useless activities. Further, the old policy of the Sikh Gurus as Guru Amar Das used to forward : "it is not proper for saints to take revenge", was changed by Guru Hargobind. He recruited soldiers, kept a large army and fought like kings. The Sikhism thus "fell from its religious height into a political trough", as Arnold Toynbee writes.² And again, the Guru recruited into his army the renegades from the Mughal army, plunderers, robbers and other men of doubtful character. The effect of such activities of the Guru, as according to Pertambal, was that the Sikhs were degenerating

Misunder-
stoodThe
complaints

1. Macauliffe, iv, pp. 238-39.

2. A Historian's Approach to Religion, p. 110.

Gurdas
compro-
mised

in their character. The Guru gave refuge to many Muslims who were supposed to be the sworn enemies of the Sikh faith, and he also maintained a friendship with the Mughals who were putting the Hindus under every type of persecution. Even Bhai Gurdas, a contemporary of the Guru, who could understand him better than any one else, compromised himself once into saying that :

"If a mother become unchaste, how can her son disgrace her ?

If a cow swallow a gem, one would not tear open her belly and kill her.

Even if a husband visit several women, his wife should preserve her chastity.

Even if a ruler make current a leather coin, the subjects are powerless, and ought to accept it.

If Brahamans drink wine, shall people burn them ?

*Even if the Guru become a play-actor, his Sikhs should not lose their faith."*¹

But later
understood

Later on, however, Bhai Gurdas seems to have understood the situation when he wrote : 'Just as one has to tie pail's neck while taking out water, to get *Mani* snake is to be killed. To get *Kasturi* from deer's neck, deer is to be killed. To get oil, *til* is to be crushed. To get kernel pomegranate is to be broken. Similarly to correct senseless people, sword has to be taken up.'

Justi-
fications

In fact the circumstances under which the Guru succeeded to the pontificate were such that there was no alternative but to do what the Guru did. The times were difficult after the execution of Guru Arjan. A stern hand was needed to correct the Mughal tyrants and those who had been challenging the peaceful lives of the Gurus and peaceful spread of the Sikh faith. Akbar's policy of religious toleration had ended with his life. Religious fanaticism of the ruling race was developing, and the Sikhs had to be prepared

Tyrants

Fanaticism

1. Macauliffe, iv, pp. 133-134.

for that. Moreover, in the Sikh faith, a large number of the *Jats* of the Majha and Malwa had been brought. They were, an illustrious and a brave race, and were a mass of discontentment and a fiery vengeance against the persecuting Mughal authorities. A use of this turbulent mass of people had to be made, as the "senseless people" had to be corrected. That was the time when, as Dr. Trumpp writes, a nation in the making must defend itself and be ready for offence, if necessary. For, if this did not happen, it would simply vanish into the limbo of oblivion. It "is not proper for saints to take revenge," it is true, but when the whole of a few generations' work of a saint's followers, and of those for whose good he would make any sacrifice on earth, is at stake, a saint must show the other side of his character and fight for the protection of that which is Right. For Guru Nanak himself had said : "it is the privilege and right of the true men to fight for, and die of righteousness." If the Sikh religion was to be a religion of householders, and not that of monks and mendicants, it had to accept the challenges of the life of a householder or vanish into the thin air.

Jats

Not to
vanish

Saint's duty

House-
holders'
religion

Guru Hargobind, indeed, was a great organiser and a great statesman, who understood the dictates of the time, and acted as under the circumstances, it was required. The steps he took, and the changes he introduced to infuse a new spirit among the Sikhs, were indeed the signs of a high understanding and excellent qualities of head and heart that he possessed. He kept two swords, lest while planning his temporal ventures, he should forget his spiritual duties. He built the *Akal Takht*, wherefrom to work his politics, yet it was built just opposite the Har Mandar, lest while talking of politics, the Sikhs should forget their religion. He organised his body-guards, and thousands collected around him to lay down their lives at his bidding, and that at the simple material remuneration of only two meals a day. The Guru understood the principles of military training thoroughly well, and kept his Sikhs on regular hunting expeditions,

Organiser
Statesman

The steps

and held for them the physical exercises. A new martial music was given to them to raise their souls in rebellion. The practice of chorus singing was started, and when the Sikhs walked round the Har Mandar, with their voices raised, and torches in their hands, when the trumpets sounded and heroic music burst forth, the people felt, a new nation had been born, the nation with a surging spirit and a martial character, yet humble of attitude and pure of deeds. The Guru admitted into his army, no doubt, the highwaymen and robbers, but such men once under the shadow of his magnetic personality, were converted into the men of the noblest of character.

Robbers' nobility

Gordon says

Payne

Cunningham

Master-diplomat

Military leader

Powerful army

Guru Hargobind, thus writes Gordon, quite changed the character of peaceful Nanak's disciples.¹ And not laying aside their rosaries, taught them the art of sword. Judging from his capacity as an organiser, thus writes Payne, the Guru "infused a military spirit among his disciples as that was needed most at that time, and soon had formidable body of fighting men at his command."² Yet more, writes Cunningham, the time was not far ahead when Sikhs should have fallen back into the folds of Hinduism as so many other faiths had. He saved them from pre-mature death, and "separated them a long way from all other sects."³ And then we may say, in order to start from a scratch, and blend in the character of his followers the qualities of a martial race, time was needed, and it was necessary that the authorities should be given no chance for a doubt. A master-diplomat, as the Guru was, he kept friendly relations with the Mughals, as his military preparations went apace.

Not only statesman and a great organiser, the Guru was a great military leader. He built his army from a mere scratch, and it became so powerful within a short time that it defeated the mightiest power in India in almost all the actions it fought. Macauliffe relates an incident which

1. The Sikhs.

2. A Short History of the Sikhs.

3. History of the Sikhs.

shows how he kept patience in a serious danger and could work his brain in the thickest of his troubles. During the battle of Amritsar, thus, the "Sikhs told the Guru that a big gun was necessary for the defence of Lohgarh. The Guru replied, 'There is a hollow tree lying there which will serve as a cannon.' It is said that from the hollow tree thus converted into a weapon of artillery the Sikhs subsequently discharged stones in such a manner as to dismay their adversaries and seriously thin their ranks."¹

Artillery
weapon

In another incident in the battle of Kartarpur, it is said, a man aimed a blow of his sword against the Guru. The Guru parried the blow and with another blow he struck off his head saying: 'Not in that manner, but so the sword is used.' When a companion asked Mohsin Fani as to what did those words of the Guru imply, he replied: "It was to give instruction, as it belongs to a Guru to teach also how to strike a blow with a sword; for a Guru is called a teacher: he did not strike out of anger, which would have been blamable."² This also shows how the Guru could keep his sense of humour even in the thickest of a battle.

Sense of
humour

Again, as Malcolm writes,³ the Guru won all the battles he fought with his adversaries, yet he did not acquire even an inch of territory. All the Guru's battles were defensive, and pointed towards the realisation of a definite aim. In the battle of Amritsar, it is wrong to say that the Guru fought merely for the sake of a hawk. The hawk, in fact, was a mere pretext. The main principles involved being the self-respect of a race which had learnt so far to be treated as mere pariahs. It was to assert their surging spirit and to strengthen the self-confidence in them. By his changed mode of living, by the physical exercises he introduced, and by the victories the Guru got for the Sikhs, thus writes Bingley, the Guru added military zeal and system to the civil organisation, and this placed him among the very great warriors of the time.⁴

No
territory

The
principles

1. Macauliffe, iv, p. 82.

2. *Dabistan*, ii, p. 275.

3. A sketch of Sikhs.

4. Bingley, Captain, 'The Sikhs' (1899).

Despite his being a great military genius, a great diplomat and a great general, the Guru did remain in the heart of hearts, only a saint. After Guru Nanak, Guru Hargobind is said to be the first Guru who undertook long travels for the purpose of preaching his faith. He went as far as Nanakmata near Pilibhit on the one side, and on the other side he went to Srinagar and on his way visited several places, where he quenched the spiritual thirst of many. A saint Ram Das is said to have asked the Guru at Srinagar that while Guru Nanak was a *Tyagi*, who had renounced all wealth and splendour, why had he changed the mode of life, when he considered himself to be the sixth representative of Guru Nanak himself. The Guru replied that Baba Nanak was a *Tyagi*, but he had renounced *Maya* and egotism, and an attachment to the world, not the world itself. Guru Nanak had declared the protection of righteousness to be the duty of every righteous person, and his change in the habits did not represent any departure from the essentials of Guru Nanak's philosophy. He kept his arms for the protection of the poor and destruction of the tyrants.

A saint

Travels

No
departure

Propaganda

To put the propaganda work on more efficient footing, the Guru appointed Bhai Gurditta with four persons under him to plan and execute the work. Preachers were sent as far as Bengal in the east, and as far as Kabul in the west. And thus according to Mohsin Fani, there were not many cities in the inhabited country where some Sikhs were not found. Hindu and Muslim converts came to Sikhism in thousands.

Thus, judging from his activities and temperament, writes Greenlees : "though it is true, his somewhat romantic temperament led him into ways different from those of his predecessors, it seems clear to us that one Guru Nanak willed through his body who prepared the Sikhs to become a manly fighting men."¹

Greenlees'
view

Humble as a man, his personal traits are perceivable from some of the incidents of his life. At Srinagar, thus

As a man

1. The Philosophy of Sikh Religion.

Macauliffe relates: "A company of Sikhs was coming from a distant village with offerings of honey for the Guru. On the way they stayed with Kattu Shah, who pressed them to let him have some of the offering. They refused saying that they could not offer to the Guru Kattu Shah's leavings." When, however, the Sikhs reached the Guru, he refused to accept from them the honey which they had refused to a needy person. The Sikhs had to go back and satisfy Kattu Shah, before the Guru could partake of it.¹ This is a clear proof of the high respect and love the Guru had for the feelings of the poor and needy persons.

Care of
needy

At Kiratpur the Guru built a mosque for the Muslims at his own expense, and he had some of his best friends belonging to the same faith. Thus, Mian Mir, a Muslim *pir*, had the highest regard for the Guru's ideology. Wazir Khan, a Muslim noble, pleaded for several times in the Guru's behalf in the court of Jehangir and Shah Jehan. Thus Macauliffe writes, when the Emperor learnt he "was astonished and inquired why the Guru had constructed a mosque. Wazir Khan's answer was prompt—'Sire, *Gurus* and *Pirs* are all men's property. They feel neither love nor hate. The Guru sitteth on Guru Nanak's throne. His is the abode of miarale. He looketh on Hindus and Muhammadans with an equal eye."² We get another instance of his fellow-feeling, which was his high and characteristic mark, at the Gwalior fort, where he refused to leave till the fifty-two *Rajas* had been released along with him.

Built
mosque

Muslim
friends

Bandi
chhor

Mohsin Fani relates an anecdote, as to how humble the Guru felt himself to be despite his kingly habits and possessions. Thus, once the Guru asked a Brahman named Deva, 'is not the whole world but one Being?' Deva replied, 'it is'. Then to drive the point home to him, he pointed towards an ass and asked, 'Do you know what this is?' But Deva replied, 'you are one with God, and therefore you are also this.'³ And the Guru merely smiled it away.

An ass

1. Macauliffe, iv, p. 63.

2. Macauliffe, iv, p. 140.

3. *Dabistan*, ii, pp. 279-280.

No
distinction

The Guru made no distinctions between low placed and high placed, and even to his own sons, he worked more as a reformer, and less as a father. Baba Atal and Baba Gurditta, the two of the Guru's sons, thus, performed some miracles, and they had to pay for it with their own lives. Of the five sons of the Guru, Baba Atal, Gurditta and Ani Rai had died during his life time. But of the living two i.e. Suraj Mal and Teg Bahadur, he appointed neither as his successor. Regarding Suraj Mal, he said, he was too much of a worldly being, while Teg Bahadur to him was a too much of a non-worldly character. The Guru had a discerning eye for merit, he found in Har Rai, the son of Gurditta, a fit man for Guruship, and he appointed him his successor.

Eye for
merit

Followers'
love

The love and devotion in which the Guru was held by his followers is proved from Mohsin Fani's account that, when, after the Guru's death, his corpse was placed on pyre, "and when, the fire rose up in high flames, a Rajput called Rajarama, who had been his servant, precipitated himself into the fire, and walked several paces in the midst of the flames, until he reached the feet of the corpse, and having laid his face upon the soles of the Guru's feet, he did not move until he expired. After him, the son of a Jat, who was in the service of Hargobind's son-in-law, leaped into fire. Many other Sikhs wished to follow his example, but the Guru Harrai forbade it."¹ And commenting on this, writes Dr Bannerji: "These eloquent examples of devotion and self-sacrifice enable us to understand the Guru's success against the heaviest of odds and show conclusively what high esteem he commanded as a leader and as a man."²

Clear proof

1. *Dabistan*, ii, pp. 280-81.

2. *Evolution of the Khalsa*, ii, p. 46.

CHAPTER XIII

GURU HAR RAI

Born of Gurditta's wife Nihal Kaur, in 1631, Har Rai succeeded to the pontificate after his grand-father's death in 1645. Regarding the life and career of Guru Har Rai, our sources of information are very scanty, and even Mohsin Fani who supposes himself to be a close friend of the Guru, writes only a few words regarding him,¹ which do not give us anything beyond the information that the Guru should have been a man of very peaceful disposition. For a number of years after the death of Guru Hargobind, Sikhism in fact seems to have gone into repose, and Guru Har Rai seems to represent that period when, all the essentials of a church-nation having been evolved by the time of Guru Arjan, and a fighting strength added to it by Guru Hargobind, the Sikhs entered into a life of peace, as if to prepare for a great venture, which was in the making, and which was to change the very course of their history, in the time of Guru Gobind Singh.

Born 1631

Became
Guru
1645

A repose

Only a few facts available to us regarding the career of Guru Har Rai show that the Guru continued maintaining an army of 2,000 strong, as he had been advised by his predecessor. But this was to be only as a precautionary measure, and some Sikh records tell us that Guru Hargobind had left him an advice that he should not enter into any venture against the Mughals. For some time, the Guru's relations seem to have continued remaining friendly with the Mughals. It is said that once Aurangzeb, a cunning and clever son of Shah Jehan, out of his jealousy, administered tiger's whiskers in a dainty dish to his eldest brother, Dara Shikoh, the heir-

Kept 2,000
strong

Relation
with
Mughals

1. See *Dabistan*, ii, p. 282.

Gave
medicine

apparent. Dara became dangerously ill, as a consequence. Several physicians were tried, but when all failed, some wise men suggested that if a chebulic myrobalan weighing fourteen chitanks and a clove weighing one masha could be produced and administered to the patient, he would be restored to health. These things were said to be available only with the Guru. The Emperor addressed a letter to the Guru, who willingly obliged him by giving the required medicine, which effected a speedy and complete cure. The Emperor was naturally pleased, and he forgot all his enmity to the Guru.¹

Way-laid

Once it is said that while the Guru was proceeding along the Sutlej, towards Malwa, he met some Mohammedan troops, one of the officers of which, recognising him as the grand-son of Guru Hargobind, who had killed the officer's grand-father, Mukhlis Khan, waylaid the Guru's wives, who were following him, and attempted violence. As the Guru had been forbidden by his predecessor from engaging in warfare, Gaura, the Raja of Bhatinda, and a Sikh of the Guru, using his own troops, protected the Guru's wives, and the Muslims as the result of a fight, escaped under cover of the darkness. Had Gaura incidentally not been present there, we do not know what should have happened. On the one hand the records say that the Guru maintained his troops as a precautionary measure, but on the other hand they assert that his predecessor had forbidden their use. Two things are

Conflicting

War of
succession

difficult to reconcile.

Shortly after, when the Emperor Shah Jehan fell ill, a war of succession started among his sons even before he died. Aurangzeb proved to be strongest of all his brothers, and Dara, the heir-apparent, directed his steps to the Punjab. Aurangzeb being a man of fanaticism in his religious beliefs, the better sympathies of the non-Muslims naturally lay with Dara, more so those of the Guru, with whom Dara had friendly relations. Dara decided to visit the Guru and seek

1. Macauliffe, iv, pp. 277-79.

his assistance against Aurangzeb. He met him, but the writers differ as to what definite help was given to him by the Guru. According to Dr. Trumpp, the Guru actually joined Dara with his Sikhs.¹ '*Khulasatu-t-Tawarikh*' also seems to imply the same thing.² According to Macauliffe, Dara met the Guru on the right bank of the Beas, and received his blessings. The "next morning the prince was informed that Aurangzeb's army was pursuing him. He then departed for Lahore requesting the Guru to impede its progress as much as possible."³

Whatever it be, it is almost certain that Dara met the Guru, and that the sympathies of the latter did lay with him. Naturally, therefore, when Aurangzeb ultimately succeeded in capturing the power at Delhi, the enemies of the Guru got a chance and decided to take revenge on him. Aurangzeb was advised to call the Guru to his presence, and convert him to Islam. Aurangzeb, therefore, addressed a letter to the Guru, expressing his desire to behold him. His purpose was that once the Guru came to Delhi, it would be easy to handle him as he desired. The Guru, however, refused to oblige him with a visit. The Emperor then ordered one of his nobles to go and arrest the Guru and bring him to Delhi. The noble, however, died on his way to the Guru, and his mission remained unfulfilled. Two or three more of Aurangzeb's similar efforts towards the direction, are also said to have failed. And ultimately, the Mohammedan priests counselled him not to use a harsh language in his summons, and invite the Guru in a friendly manner. The Emperor did so, and when the letter reached the Guru, he decided to send his son, Ram Rai, in his place to the Emperor. We do not know how far the details of the story quoted above from the Sikh records are true, but this much is certain that the Guru did send Ram Rai to meet the Emperor.

Dara met
Guru

Aurangzeb
invited him

Ram Rai
sent

1. *Adi Granth*, p. LXXXV.
2. Zafar Hasan's edition, p. 513.
3. Macauliffe, iv, pp. 302-303.

Instruc-
tions to
Ram Rai

At the time of Ram Rai's departure, special instructions were given by the Guru to him, as to how he would behave in the Emperor's court. The Guru strictly impressed on Ram Rai the propriety of not countenancing any objections the Emperor might make to the Granth Sahib, but of replying to him patiently and to the purpose. Ram Rai, however, forgot the instructions of his father, when he reached the court of the Emperor. He not only performed several miracles at that place, he rather did the most criminal thing in altering a line of Guru Nanak in the Granth as well, in order to gratify the Emperor. The verse was :

Mis-repre-
sentation

"The ashes of the Muhammadan fall into the potter's clod ;

*Vessels and bricks are fashioned from them ; they cry out as they burn."*¹

When asked upon to explain the above, Ram Rai said that the original words : '*Mitti Musalmanki*', meaning : 'the ashes of the Mohammedan', was a misprint. The correct words according to him should have been : '*Mitti beimanki*', or 'the ashes of the faithless.' There is no doubt that by doing this, Ram Rai was able to give a perfect satisfaction to the Emperor. But here was a misconduct on his part, and a mis-representation of a reality in the Granth, with which the Guru was hardly going to put up. When Ram Rai's perfidy was reported to the Guru, being distressed at insult to Guru Nanak and the Granth, he immediately decided that Ram Rai was not fit to succeed him to the pontificate. 'The Guruship', said he, 'is like a tigress's milk which can only be contained in a golden cup. Only he who is ready to devote his life thereto is worthy of it. Let Ram Rai not look on my face again. Let him abide with Aurangzeb, and amass money at his court.'²

Guru
distressed

Dipossessed

1. Macauliffe, iv, p. 309.

2. Ibid, iv, p. 310.

When Ram Rai took leave of the Emperor and came back, he pitched his tent at a spot twelve miles from Kiratpur, and wrote his father a letter imploring his forgiveness. But the Guru replied that he never wanted to see him again, and he could go wherever he desired. Ram Rai wrote to his uncle Dhir Mal to intercede in his behalf. But nothing could help him to win back his father's favour.

No
forgiveness

Another incident that is said to have occurred in the time of Guru was that he laid the foundation of the future Phulkian states in the Malwa. Once during his preaching tours, when the Guru came to see the tank near Nathana, where his grand-father had fought a battle against the Mughals, two brothers, Kala and Karam Chand of the Marhaj tribe complained to the Guru that the people of the Kaura tribe would not permit them to live peacefully. Thereupon, the Guru sent for Jait Pirana, the head of the Kaura tribe, and tried to induce him to give the brothers some land for their maintenance. The leader refused it, and after some other efforts towards the direction also had failed, the Guru helped the brothers to occupy some land forcibly, and in the fight that ensued, Jait Pirana was killed. After Kala and his friends had settled down, they complained of another difficulty to the Guru that the people of Kaura tribe, their neighbours would not intermarry with them. Thereupon, the Guru recommended to the Sikhs to form marriage alliances with the Marhaj people.

Founded
Phulkian
states

The help

So long as the Guru stayed in the Malwa, Kala and his friends frequently waited on him. Once during his visit, Kala took his two nephews, Phul and Sandali, the sons of Rup Chand to the Guru. Phul was hungry at the time, and out of compassion for the fatherless child, the Guru blessed him saying that he would become a great, famous and wealthy man. This prophecy proved to be correct. Phul had six sons; from Tilok Singh, the eldest of them, the Rajas of Nabha and Jind descended; and from Ram Singh, his second son, descended the Maharaja of Patiala.

Phul
blessed

Phulkian
states

The predecessors of Guru Har Rai, had made Majha

Preaching
activities

Missionary
centres

Died 1661

as the centre of activities, but this Guru is said to have been the first to take up the preaching work in the Malwa seriously. Besides his preaching tours elsewhere, he made Malwa a special object of his visits. As the *Masands* appointed by Guru Arjan had slackened in their preaching duties, the Guru is said to have appointed Bhagat Bhagwan as a head-preacher in the east, where the latter, together with his followers, established as many as 360 *Gaddis*. Bhagat Bhagwan was originally a *Bairagi* monk, and was named as Bhagat Gir, it was only when he became the Guru's Sikh that he got the name Bhagwan. The Guru established another preaching centre in the central districts of the Punjab, and appointed his devoted Sikhs to carry on the work. Thus, two missionary centres were established by Guru Har Rai, to which the third was added by Guru Teg Bahadur and fourth and fifth by Guru Gobind Singh, who did away with the *Masand* system altogether.

These were in short the achievements of Guru Har Rai. He died on 6th October, 1661, at the young age of only 31. Ram Rai having already discredited himself, the Guru appointed Har Krishan, his younger son, only six years old at the time, as his successor, and then closed his eyes for an eternal sleep.

CHAPTER XIV

GURU HAR KRISHAN

Born in 1656, Guru Har Krishan was the second son of Guru Har Rai. Even in his young age, the Guru was given to keen devotion and regular religious practices. His merit had been recognised by his father, and we have discussed how his elder brother, Ram Rai, was rejected, and this child was appointed to succeed the father.

Born 1656

At the time of Guru Harkrishan's succession to the pontificate, his elder brother, Ram Rai, is said to have been at Delhi. Basing all his account on Macauliffe, we do not understand how Dr. Bannerji has drawn the conclusion that the Sikh accounts have unjustly blackened the character of Ram Rai, and that "though Ram Rai sometimes represented as having been his father's envoy at the imperial court, he was in reality nothing but a hostage whom the Emperor kept as a security for the continued good conduct of Guru Har Rai."¹ It cannot be denied that whenever the choice for Guruship fell upon a younger member of the family, the elder members did feel jealous. We have the instances such as that of Prithia, who had no compunction even in seeing his younger brother subjected to the most brutal tortures. Efforts were made even to poison Guru Arjan's son to death. Such things had been happening right from the time of Guru Nanak, and if Ram Rai repeated the history in his case, or even if he was goaded into doing so by some body, he being quite young at the time, there was nothing strange in it, and such inducements had been given by the interested persons, in the case of others too. Moreover, when Ram Rai can freely move among the Sikhs at Delhi, he can be goaded into action, and he can plan it as well, as Dr. Bannerji agrees, and

Bannerji's
view

Regarding
Ram Rai

1. Evolution of the Khalsa, ii, pp. 52-53.

Difficult to understand

he can leave Delhi at his will and come back as he wishes, it is difficult to understand how he could be considered as a hostage in the court of Aurangzeb.

Ram Rai's appeal to Emperor

Whatever it be, there can be no doubt in the fact that when Guru Har Rai died, Ram Rai was either already at Delhi, or he went there immediately after that. He obtained an audience with the Emperor, and placed his case before him, telling him that he was the rightful successor to his father, but that his younger brother had taken the possession of the throne. He requested the Emperor to intercede in his behalf. The Emperor saw in this a very good opportunity for realising his religious mission. If he could get Ram Rai the *gaddi*, the latter would be a mere tool in his hands and through him he would perhaps be able to spread the Islamic faith in the Punjab. Or even if he was able to "set both brothers at variance, and they shall die by mutual slaughter,"¹ his purpose would be served.

Harkrishan summoned

The Emperor called Raja Jai Singh to his presence, and ordered him to summon Guru Har Krishan to Delhi, and also to see that the child Guru was treated with all respect during his journey. The Guru had been forbidden by his late father, from going to the Emperor and seeing his face. The child Guru, therefore, refused to oblige Raja Jai Singh. But ultimately he was prevailed upon to visit Delhi, where if he did not so desire he might not go to the Emperor's presence. The child Guru soon reached Delhi. There, efforts were made to make him agree for visiting the Emperor. But in the meanwhile, the child Guru fell seriously ill, contracting small-pox, and of this he died on March 30, 1664, at the very young age of eight years.

Died 1664

Successor

Before, however, the child Guru died, he sent for five paise and a coconut, and not being able to move his body, waved his hand three times in the air in token of circum-ambulating his successor, and on the enquiry of a *Masand*, as to who would be his successor, he could utter only these

1. Macauliffe, iv, p. 318.

words: 'Baba Bakale', that is his successor would be found in the village Bakala.

Baba
Bakale

During the short period of Guru Harkrishan's pontificate, the already deteriorating institution of Masand, declined yet further. "The masands began to beat and plunder poor Sikhs, and threatened with the Guru's curse all who resented their conduct.....The masands became proud and rebellious, and kept the greater part of the offerings for themselves.....for they deemed that all the Sikhs were in their own power, and that they could appoint to the Guruship whomsoever they pleased."¹ Little knowing that by planning and thinking so, they were aiming simply at self-destruction.

Masand
deterio-
ration

1. Macauliffe, iv, pp. 316-317.

CHAPTER XV

GURU TEG BAHADUR

Born 1622

Teg Bahadur was the son of the sixth Guru, Hargobind, born of his wife Nanaki in 1622. In his very childhood, he was given to deep meditation and would often indulge in trains of thought, during which he would speak to none. He was married to Gujri, a daughter of one, Lal Chand, who belonged to Kartarpur, in the district Jullundur. Guru Hargobind did not select him for Guruship for his other-worldly character, but he is said to have prophesied that he would one day become a Guru and play a significant role for the protection of his faith. Greenlees writes that he was named Teg Bahadur, because his father, Guru Hargobind, foresaw in him a man brave in sword.¹

Married to
Gujri

Brave in
sword

Successor

We have already studied how when the end of Guru Har Krishan's life drew nearer, he called for five paise and a coconut, waved his hand three times in air in token of circumambulating his successor, and uttered the words Baba Bakale, which meant that his successor would be found in the village Bakala. After the death of Guru Har Gobind, Teg Bahadur with his wife and mother had gone to live in that village, and had been there since then, meditating and absorbed in the worship of God. After Guru Har Krishan had died, now a search for the Guru started in the village Bakala, but it was not easy to discover the true Guru. For we learn that hearing of the last words of Guru Har Krishan, as many as twenty-two of the Sodhis of Bakala began to claim succession and set up themselves as Gurus each calling the rest as hypocrites and deceivers. For a long time the things continued in a confusion and no decision

22 Gurus at
Bakala

1. Philosophy of Sikh Religion.

could be made whether one was the true Guru or the other, till at last an incident is said to have occurred, which distinguished the true Guru from the hypocrites. It is said that a Sikh named Makkhan Shah who, according to Sukha Singh, belonged to Gujrat in the Deccan,¹ and was a rich merchant, once facing a shipwreck prayed to the Guru who might have been occupying the throne of Guru Nanak, that if he escaped he would make an offering of five hundred gold *mohars*. He was saved and he soon reached Bakala with the offering. But reaching here, he found as many as twenty-two persons claiming to be the true Gurus, with the result that he was quite perplexed. Ultimately he resolved to make a trial of the pretenders. He visited each and made him an offering of two *mohars* and observed him that if he was a true Guru, he would demand the rest of 498 as well. None of the twenty-two, however, could discover what the man had in his mind. Makkhan Shah was still more perplexed and he was about to leave the village in his utter disappointment when somebody told him that there was one more person in the village, namely Teg Bahadur, who did not pretend to be a Guru, but whom he could try if he was. Makkhan Shah proceeded thither and made an offering of two *mohars*, but to his delightful surprise Teg Bahadur remarked: 'How now, O Sikh, thou art trying to wheedle the Guru by presenting him with two gold *mohars*? Where are the five hundred gold *mohars* thou didst promise when thy vessel was sinking.'² Makkhan Shah hailed Teg Bahadur as the true Guru and searcher of hearts, and ascending a house-top and, waving a flag, proclaimed from there, 'I have found the Guru! I have found the Guru!!' "On hearing this the Sikhs assembled from every quarter, and with all due formalities and observances placed Teg Bahadur, then in his forty-third year and the very image of Guru Nanak, on Guru's throne?"³

Makkhan
Shah

Discovered
true Guru

Placed on
throne

Whatever be the merit of this story, we can be pretty sure

1. Gur Bilas, Chap. I.

2. Macauliffe, iv, p. 333.

3. Ibid, pp. 333-334.

No bed of
roses

Guru fired
at

Property
restored

Amritsar
doors closed

that by the time of Guru Teg Bahadur, the contest for Guruship had seriously sharpened, and the Guru *gaddi* for him was not going to be a bed of roses. Out of their jealousy of the position the Guru occupied, some Sodhi Khatri, notable among them being Dhir Mal, the eldest son of Gurditta, were determined to put an end to the Guru's life and assume the Guruship themselves. Of several efforts made by these persons in their nefarious designs to harm the Guru, a few may here be narrated. Thus it is said that when Dhir Mal saw how Teg Bahadur had been honoured by Makkhan Shah, he became violently jealous of him, and ultimately prevailed upon a masand, named Sihan, who taking a score of men to kill the Guru, actually fired at him. The bullet did strike the intended victim, although it did not prove fatal. The masand seized all the moveable property of the Guru, together with the *mohars* offered by Makkhan Shah and decamped with it to the house of Dhir Mal. When Makkhan Shah learnt of it, he invaded Dhir Mal's house and seized him and his accomplices. The Guru's property was recovered and Dhir Mal's property was also seized, and with it Dhir Mal and his accomplices were brought to the Guru. On the Guru's order, however, all the persons thus seized, were released, and their property was also restored to them, though the Guru kept his own property to himself.

This however did not bring the Guru's enemies to their senses and they continued in their designs to harm him. Shortly after this when the Guru visited Amritsar to behold the temple of Guru Ram Das, after he had bathed, the ministrants of the temple closed the doors of the Har Mandar against him, and he had to return without fulfilling his mission. The Guru now decided to leave the village Bakala to escape from the persecuting hands of his enemies and went to Kiratpur. But here again he was plagued with the jealousy of the Sodhis, and he sought rest on some land about six miles distant, which he subsequently purchased from the Raja of Kehlur and thus founded the town of

Anandpur. Archer says : "This Anandpur was off-centre, and remote, but expediency warranted the choice, as circumstances soon confirmed."¹

To
Anandpur

This, however, further enraged Dhir Mal, who now began to conspire with Ram Rai, who was at Delhi, on different lines. Forster, Malcolm, Cunningham and Latif all agree as in the words of Latif that Ram Rai sought an opportunity "of injuring Teg Bahadur, by representing to the Emperor that his designs were detrimental to the State, and suggesting that immediate measures should be taken to check his ambition. Warrants were accordingly issued from the court for the arrest of Tegh Bahadur, as a pretender to power and disturber of the public peace." According to Latif, the Guru was actually brought to Delhi, where he was lodged in the house of the raja of Jaipur. "The raja interceded in his behalf with the Emperor, and assured his majesty that Teg Bahadur was a peaceful faqir and aspired to no political power, that he preferred the life of a recluse, and had resolved upon visiting holy places on a pilgrimage."² Latif's view that the Guru was actually brought to Delhi is not, however, accepted by others, while they do agree that Raja of Jaipur interceded in his behalf. The Sikh tradition, however disagrees with the whole proposal that the Guru was summoned to Delhi at all. According to it, when the Guru could not get peace at the newly founded town of Anandpur, he decided to leave it and proceed on a preaching tour, to avoid annoyance at the hands of his relations. The Guru proceeded to the Malwa country and visited several villages in the present state of Patiala. Thence he proceeded to Kurukshetra, he crossed the Jamna, visited Agra, Itawa and Priyag. At Priyag the Guru remained for about six months, and here his wife Gujari, became pregnant. From here he proceeded to Banaras, thence to Gaya and Patna. Patna at the time was a strong Mohammedan centre. Crowds of both sexes began to visit him and the Guru said :

Emperor
approached

Called to
Delhi

Not
accepted

To Malwa

At Patna

1. Archer, *The Sikhs*, pp. 182-183.

2. *History of the Punjab*, p. 259.

'Wherever is the congregation of saints, there it is God's order for me to abide.'¹ Here after a few days of his stay, Mirza Raja Ram Singh, the son of Mirza Raja Jai Singh, requested the Guru to assist him in his military expedition to the Kamrup country, which had been entrusted to him by the Emperor, and upon the success of which depended the future of the whole of Rajputana, which would he annexed in case of its failure. The Guru agreed to assist, and asking his mother and wife to remain at Patna, he proceeded against the Ahom king of Kamrup (Assam). The expedition was successful. But soon after, the Guru learning of the birth of a son to his wife, hurried back to Patna.

To Assam

Intriguing

The fact of Guru's accompanying Mirza Raja Ram Singh, in an expedition against the Ahom king has been intriguing the historians' mind. While there is an indisputable evidence that the Guru did visit Kamrup, it seems difficult to connect it with Mirza Raja Ram Singh and then say that the Guru returned when he received the news of the birth of his son. Because we know that Guru Gobind Singh, the son of Guru Teg Bahadur, was born in 1666, while the expedition against the Ahom King was led by Mirza Raja Ram Singh in 1668. Possibly, the Guru's visit to Kamrup has been wrongly mixed up with an expedition of Mirza Raja Ram Singh. The Guru, instead, might have accompanied Raja Subal Singh Sesodia, in his expedition to Chittagong, which was led during the winter of 1665-66, as evidently suggested by Gurbux Singh,² although we do not know whether this proposal too will bear a close scrutiny.

Back to
Punjab

Whatever it be, after returning to Patna and a protracted residence there, the Guru communicated his resolve to return to the Punjab, to his mother, and leaving instruction for his family to join him in the Punjab on the receipt of a message from him to the effect, he left Patna. The Guru did not take his family along possibly because he still apprehended

1. Macauliffe, iv, 347.

2. Decca Review, 1915, p. 229.

some trouble in that quarter. But after seeing the situation in the Punjab comparatively calm, he sent for his family. But the Guru was not destined to enjoy peace for a long time. There were other factors hostile to the Guru, and the clouds were gathering to bring about a catastrophe and to shake the Sikhism to its very roots, opening up before it new fields of activities. The Guru was executed at Delhi which brought about a violent change in the Sikh character, and acted as a mile-stone in the Sikh history. We might study here the factors which led to his execution.

Other
factors

The Execution

The character of Guru Teg Bahadur has been a subject of serious controversy among some writers. Thus writes Golam Hussein : Teg Bahadur "finding himself at the head of so many thousands of people, became aspiring ; and he united his concerns with one Hafyz-aadeem, a Mohammedan fakir.....These two men no sooner saw themselves followed by multitudes, implicitly addicted to their chief's will, than forsaking every honest calling, they fell to subsisting by plunder and rapine, laying waste the whole province of Pendjab." And further he writes that both these persons were seized by the Governor of Lahore, under the order of the Emperor. The Guru was confined in the fort of Gwalior, while the Muslim fakir was deported to Afghanistan. After some time the Governor of the fort was ordered "to put Tygh-Bahadur to death, to cut his body into four quarters and to hang them at the four gates of the fortress, a sentence which was literally executed."¹ The absurdity of this account hardly needs to be emphasised. The Sisganj Gurdwara at Delhi, which stands to commemorate the Guru's execution at that place, and the strong and unanimous tradition of the Sikhs regarding the event leaves absolutely no doubt that the Guru could have never been executed in the manner expressed by Gulam Hussein. And if this part of his statement is

The causes

Golam
Hussein's
view

Mistaken

1. *Siyar-ul-Mutakhkharin*, English translation, R. Cambay and Co., pp. 84-86. Latif also forwards similar views—*History of the Punjab*, p. 259.

Writers
misled

incorrect, it casts a serious reflection on the authenticity of the whole account of this author, which obviously thus, we should read but very cautiously. But the tragedy is that without sifting and without trying to test the authenticity of the facts mentioned in his book by this author, some writers have permitted themselves freely to be misled, and have woven around the Guru's character a fabric of cheap politics, which seems hardly creditable to the scholars of history. Dr. Trumpp writes thus : "The Guru appears by no means as a humble spiritual instructor, but riding at the front of well armed disciples, who, if not willingly provided, levied contributions on the Zamindars and the inhabitants of the villages through which they passed, and made predatory incursions on the Muhammadan population." And further he continues : the Mohammedan reports "which ascribe his capture and execution to political reasons deserve therefore full credit, the Sikh tradition itself confirming by these *Sakhis* the charges brought against him."¹ Cunningham also writes that the Guru was "more of the kingly than priestly spirit."² And J. N. Sirkar also seems to imply the same thing.³

Not
interested
in politics

Arguments

That the Guru was the least interested in any splendour much less in levying contributions on Zamindars, is proved from the unimpeachable evidence of Guru Hargobind Singh himself who did not select him as his successor because he was of other worldly character, and was less interested in matters mundane. Moreover none of the earlier Gurus had done anything in the way of levying contributions on Zamindars and 'inhabitants', and the ninth Guru who was the representative of the same spirit and faith as his predecessors, could hardly be expected to do so. That the ninth Guru's execution was connected with politics in the least, and that it was a self-sought sacrifice given for the protection of the Hindu faith and as a result of the Guru's refusal to perform

1. *Adi Granth* p. lxxxix.

2. *History of the Sikhs*, p. 85.

3. *History of Aurangzeb*, iii, p. 312.

any miracle at the Emperor's court, is perfectly proved by the evidence of Guru Gobind Singh, who writes in his Bachitra Natak thus :

*"After him (Har Krishan) came Tegh Bahadur,
Who protected the frontal marks and sacrificial threads
of the Hindus
And displayed great bravery in the Kal Age.
When he put an end to his life for the sake of holy men,
He gave his head but uttered not a groan.
He suffered martyrdom for the sake of his religion ;
He gave his head but swerved not from his determination.
God's people would be ashamed
To perform the tricks of mountebanks and cheats."*¹

Moreover in the *Sakhis* regarding the Guru's "predatory incursions on the Mohammadan population," as Dr. Trumpp himself writes, "no distinct line is drawn between the wanderings of Guru Teg Bahadur and those of Guru Gobind Singh, so that it remains uncertain, where the first end, and where the second commence."² Possibly therefore, the activities of Guru Gobind Singh have been mixed up with those of Guru Teg Bahadur, and a character is assigned to the latter, which is wholly foreign to his person.

Mixed

There were in fact factors other than any thing like a political ambition, which led to the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur. Guru Teg Bahadur had undertaken long preaching tours, making many new conversions to the Sikh faith. While such activities of the non-Muslims could be tolerated under benignant rulers such as Akbar, they could hardly be put up with under the religious fanatics, as Aurangzeb was. As Payne writes : "When in 1658, Aurangzeb ascended the throne he lost no opportunity of persecuting the Gurus and their war-like disciples."³ Ram Rai had already been at Delhi, adding fuel to the fire. A distorted picture of the Guru's character was presented at

Other factors

Preaching tours

Fuel to fire

1. Macauliffe, Vol. v. p. 295.

2. Adī Granth, p. lxxxix, foot-note.

3. A Short History of the Sikhs, p. 32.

Different
angle

the Emperor's court. For Aurangzeb, there was no distinction between politics and religion, and one of the essential parts of the Emperor's state-policy being the conversion of the entire mass of the Hindus to his faith, the religious activities of the Guru were viewed from a different angle. This may also perhaps explain why the Muslim writers have tried to give a political colour to the Guru's religious activities, which by them, have been declared to be dangerous for the public peace.

Fanatic
Aurangzeb

At Gujrat

Aurangzeb's character, in fact, had been known even before he acceded to the throne. It is said that during the time Aurangzeb worked as the viceroy in Gujrat, he took certain such steps against the Hindus that they shuddered at the very thought that such a persecuting monarch should become an emperor of India. In 1644, thus, he issued an order under which all the newly built Hindu temples were destroyed in the province of Gujrat. After his accession to the throne, orders were issued to pull down all the temples in Orissa, built during the last ten years.

Orissa

According to Sirkar : "A systematic plan was followed for carrying out the policy of iconoclasm. Officers were appointed in all the subdivisions and cities of the Empire....to enforce the regulations of Islam, such as the suppression of the use of wine and bhang, and of gambling. The destruction of Hindu places of worship was one of their chief duties, and so large was the number of officers employed in the task that a 'Director-General' had to be placed over them to guide their activity."¹ Hindu schools were destroyed, the temples of Somnath, Mathura and Benaras were the objects of special destructive attention. Jazia continued upon the Hindus, and custom duties on the Muslims were abolished. He issued proclamations throughout the empire that the Hindus should embrace Islam, and that those who did so should receive jagirs, state services, and all the immunities granted to royal favourites. The Emperor took the advice of his priests, and all the plans suggested by them were adopted.

Director-
General

Other
activities

The experiment of mass conversion was first tried in Kashmir. Macauliffe writes : "There were two reasons for this. In the first place, the Kashmiri Pandits were supposed to be educated, and it was thought that, if they were converted, the inhabitants of Hindustan would readily follow their example; secondly, Peshawar and Kabul, Muhammadan countries, were near, and if the Kashmiris offered any resistance to their conversion, the Mohammadans might declare a religious war and overpower and destroy them."¹ "Sher Afghan Khan, the Emperor's viceroy in Kashmir, set about converting the Kashmiris by the sword and massacred those who preserved in their adherence to the faith of their forefathers. It is said that there was piled up a heap of one maund and a quarter, or a hundred weight of *janeus* or sacrificial threads. The Hindus who would not be converted and whom Sher Afghan Khan's troops could not capture fled the country. Even Mohammadans who in any way assisted the Hindus were mercilessly put to death."²

It is said that when the persecuting policy of Sher Afghan Khan in Kashmir reached its utter most limit, some Kashmiri Pandits decided to approach Guru Teg Bahadur at Anandpur. When the Guru learnt their sad story, after some contemplation he reached the conclusion that the malady required the sacrifice of some great man to be uprooted. The child Gobind Rai happened to come to him just this time, and on enquiry when he learnt what the Guru had in his mind, he remarked : 'For that purpose who is more worthy than thou who art at once generous and brave ?'³ This precipitated the matter, and the Guru instructed the Pandits to go to the Emperor and tell him that if he could convert to Islam, Guru Teg Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru on the throne of Baba Nanak, who was protector of faith

In
Kashmir

Two
reasons

A pile

Pandits to
Guru

1. Macauliffe, iv, p. 369.

2. Ibid, pp. 369-70.

3. This version is of Sukha Singh's *Gur Bilas*, Chap. v; according to Suraj Prakash, however, though summoned by his father from Patna to Anandpur, Gobind Rai never met him again. Macauliffe, iv, pp. 368, 372.

Emperor's
summon

and religion, all the people, including themselves, would adopt the Islamic faith without any resistance. The Pandits did the same, and the Emperor sent two officers forthwith to summon the Guru. The Guru replied that he would come to Delhi after the rainy season, and after the officers had left, he took leave of his family and started for Delhi, on his way visiting several places and preaching his faith. Soon he reached a place near the present fort of Bahadurgarh in the Patiala state, and spent the rainy season there with a Muslim friend, Saif-ul-din. When the rainy season ended, the Emperor's officers reached Anandpur once again to summon the Guru, but not finding him there, they reported the case to Emperor, who issued orders to his officers to search for the Guru, and arrest him wherever he was found. It was also proclaimed that whosoever acted

Guru to
Delhi

as a host to the Guru, would be awarded a severe punishment. Meanwhile, after the rainy season ended, the Guru took leave of his Muslim friend and started at ease towards Delhi, halting at several places, and preaching his faith, but yet not being discovered by the Government Officials. At last the Guru reached Agra, and encamped in a garden outside the city. He is here said to have given a shepherd boy a large gold ring from his finger, set with diamonds, and asked him to bring two rupees' worth sweets. The Guru's purpose clearly was to get himself arrested. The shepherd boy went to a confectioner who enquired from him as to where had he got that priceless ring from. On getting information, the confectioner reported the matter to the police. The police accompanied the shepherded boy to the owner of the ring, who readily disclosed his identity. The Guru thus was arrested and brought to the Emperor at Delhi.

A golden
ring

Here the Guru was given three alternatives i.e., to accept Islam, to perform some miracle, or to accept punishment. The Guru naturally preferred the last alternative. He was locked in an iron cage, and for quite some time, the efforts continued to be made to convert the Guru to Islam. Here, after a long

Arrested

Three
alternatives

Here the Guru was given three alternatives i.e., to accept Islam, to perform some miracle, or to accept punishment. The Guru naturally preferred the last alternative. He was locked in an iron cage, and for quite some time, the efforts continued to be made to convert the Guru to Islam. Here, after a long

time of confinement and harassment, according to some Sikh writers, the Guru became hopeless, desperate and lost his heart, when he addressed to his son the following verse :

Desperate

"My strength is exhausted, I am in chains, and have no resource.

Saith Nanak, God is now my refuge; He will succour me as He did the elephant."

To which the son, Gobind Rai replied :

"Strength is thine; thy fetters are loosed; thou has every resource;

Nanak, everything is in thy power; it is only thou who canst assist thyself."

The interpretation given by these Sikh writers to the above two verses which are found in the Adi Granth, seems, however, to be utterly misleading. That the Guru did keep up his spirit till his end, and treated his life to be a mere dream, not to be valued beyond his principle, is completely proved from another verse, which he is said to have addressed at the same time to his wife, thus :

Mis-leading

"Ram passed away, Rawan passed away with his large family;

*Saith Nanak, nothing is permanent ; the world is like a dream."*¹

Moreover, desperation and heartlessness ill match with the Guru's character, who willingly offered himself for sacrifice, and at the last stage got himself arrested. The only explanation for the above two verses is that both of them belong to the ninth Guru, the tenth Sikh Guru having added no hymn of his own in the Granth. In these two verses, the Guru poses a problem in the first, and then replies himself in the second, in the traditional poetical style of Guru Nanak. The word tenth *Mehla* has not been used with the verse supposed to be that of Guru Gobind Singh, and there is no other proof to assert that it did belong to him.

Ill-match

No proof

1. Macauliffe, iv, pp. 384-385.

Torture
proposed

A miracle

Head
severed

Issue
clouded

Importance
minimised

Whatever it be, the Guru suffered in the iron cage for a long time, and when every effort in inducing him to accept Islam or perform some miracle failed, ultimately it is said to have been proposed to subject the Guru to some barbarous tortures. The Guru thereupon, resolved to play a trick, and expressed his readiness to show a miracle. Latif writes : "He was arrayed before the Emperor, all the *Omerahs* of the State being present to witness the miracle he was about to perform. The Guru said, before the assembly of the *Omerahs*, that the duty of the man was to pray to the Lord, but since he had been commanded by his majesty to show a miracle, he had resolved upon complying with the king's orders. He wrote on a piece of paper, which he said was charmed, and then, having tied it round his neck, declared that the sword would fall harmless on it by the effect of the charm which was written upon it. The executioner was now summoned to test the miraculous charm. The blow was given and the head of the Guru rolled on the floor to the amazement of the court. The paper was then read and contained these words : "*Sir dia, Sar na dia*"—meaning, that he had given his head, but not his secret."¹ This happened in 1675. "We may take it therefore," writes Dr. Bannerji, "the Guru fell a victim to religious bigotry and it is understandable why later Moham-medan writers sought to cloud the issue by giving it a political colour."²

Significance

The martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur is a great event in the history of the Punjab. Some Muslim writers have tried to minimise its importance by saying that the Guru had to lay down his life as a result of his violation of peace in the Punjab. Latif also after giving an account of the martyrdom as based on the Sikh writings concludes thus : "Such is the account given by a wonder-loving people, though it is more probable that the Guru was executed as a rebel against

1. History of the Punjab, p. 260.

2. Evolution of the Khalsa, ii, p. 63.

Government.”¹ The views of the author of *Siyar-ul-Mutakhkharin* have also been quoted in this respect, according to which the Guru forsaking every honest calling, fell to subsisting by plunder and rapine, which resulted in his execution in the fort of Gwalior. But those who have tried to indulge into such calculated probabilities, seem to have failed in taking into account the barbaric practices of Aurangzeb which created a sort of panic in the country. If thousands of temples were destroyed in Gujrat and in Orissa, and if lakhs of people who did not want to come into the Islamic faith, were either forced into Islam, or forced into the lives of pariahs or were butchered like animals, no body has ventured to say that all these innocent people had thus to suffer because of some political part which they tried to play in order to disturb the public peace. The entire mass of the Hindu population of India had not sold their moral courage and desire to live a life of honour, so as to be treated as the Muslim authorities were determined to treat them. Some were bound to resist it, whether by arms or by a sort of propaganda among the people, and if one calls it the forsaking of honest calling, or by his intellectual depravity and religious perversity, one stretches it to mean ‘plunder’ and ‘rapine’, one will be writing no history, though one may deceive himself by saying otherwise. The writings of the Muslim authors “are utterly incompatible with the whole tenor of Guru Teg Bahadur’s life and writings,” says Macauliffe, and they “cannot be accepted as even an approach to history.”² The Guru simply fell a victim to the Muslim religious bigotry, and it was bound to have the consequences similar, to those the sacrifices of the great martyrs ever brought.

They have failed

Some bound to resist

In-compatible

Indignation

Thus writes Dr. Narang ; “In his death the Guru surpassed anything that he had done in his life. He was known throughout Upper India, was highly revered by Rajput Princes, and was actually worshipped by the peasantry of the

1. History of the Punjab, p. 260.

2. Macauliffe, p. 392.

Punjab. His execution was universally regarded by the Hindus as a sacrifice for their faith. The whole Punjab began to burn with indignation and revenge."¹

Besides, in the character of the Sikhs too, the sacrifice was bound to have a far reaching effect. Just as after the martyrdom of Guru Arjan, Guru Hargobind had to have a resort to sword and army ; after the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur, his successor, Guru Gobind Singh, had to appeal to arms, but this time to different consequences. After the Guru had been executed, not a Sikh in Delhi dared to come forward and take away his body for cremation, because of the fear of arrest and similar treatment. Only under the cover of late stormy night, Bhai Jaita, a Sikh of Labana tribe, removed the Guru's body for cremation while his head was taken away to Anandpur by Bhai Jiwan. It was tantalizing, indeed, to Guru Gobind Singh, who is said to have taken a decision forthwith, to give to his Sikhs such shape and form, that none of them would henceforth be able to conceal himself, and call himself a Sikh only when the circumstances favoured it. It was as a result of this resolve, that the militant Khalsa later took birth, with five of their own symbols to distinguish them from the rest of the communities.

It was as a result of this martyrdom that Guru Gobind Singh started maintaining a huge army once again, and fought battles with the tyrants. The reaction continued in the shape of Banda Bahadur's valiant marches against the corrupt Muslim rulers in the Punjab. It continued later in the rise of different Sikh *Misls* and then ended ultimately in Ranjit Singh's raising a Sikh standard of monarchy, and in the consolidation of the Sikhs into a distinct nation in itself.

The execution of Guru Teg Bahadur, as according to Gordon,² sowed dragon-teeth in Delhi, which soon brought its harvest.

Moreover, as a result of this sacrifice, the Hindu religion

1. Transformation of Sikhism.
2. The Sikhs.

Birth of
militant
race

Separate
symbols

Sikh
monarchy

Distinct
nation

Dragon-
teeth

was saved, as Guru Gobind Singh wrote in his Bachitra Natak. Or as Latif writes : "when the courtiers, tinged with superstition, saw what had occurred, they were struck with horror and surprise. The emperor himself was disgusted and displeased, and ordered the crowd to be dispersed."¹ He was convinced that it was no more possible to convert the entire mass of Hindus into Islam.

Hindus
saved

Guru Gobind Singh writes in his Bachitra Natak :

*"Having broken his potsherd on the head of the King of
Dilhi he departed to paradise.*

Potsherd
broken

*No one else coming into the world acted like Teg
Bahadur."*

*"The world was in mourning for the demise of Teg
Bahadur ;*

Weeping
and
rejoicing

*There was weeping for him in the whole world, but
rejoicing in paradise."*²

1. Latif, p. 260.

2. Macauliffe, iv, p. 392

CHAPTER XVI

GURU GOBIND SINGH

A—The Circumstances

Born 1666

Circumstances
against

Will of
sovereign

Leaders
loyal

Guru Gobind Singh was born at Patna in 1666. We have already studied how his father laid down his life at Delhi, in 1675, after which Gobind Rai, a mere boy of nine years of age succeeded to the pontificate. The circumstances at the time were peculiar. The Guru was a mere boy, but the problems he was called upon to face were great. The policy of comparative peace which his immediate predecessors had followed, had brought about simply catastrophic results. The family grudges and religious fervour of the rulers, which had resulted in the execution of Guru Arjan and that of Guru Teg Bahadur, still persisted. Will of the sovereign continued to be the law of the land. Hindus paid the capitation taxes and were treated like pariahs; while Muslims were considered to be the favoured children of the State. While the strong proselytising attitude of the state, exhibited during the early years of Aurangzeb's reign, had slackened to certain extent, temples still continued to be razed to the ground, and the sacred threads of the Hindus continued to be broken. And the tragedy is that "although the masses of the Hindus were bitter against the galling yoke of tyranny, the so-called natural leaders of the people were most officially loyal to the throne and most bitterly hostile to all progressive movements."¹ The petty hill states which were supposed to be the strong-holds of the Hindus, were most averse to any change in their age-worn practices and to the recognition of the exigencies of the time. They were loyal to the Mughals, looked upon the lower classes with disdain, and were first class idolaters ; while these were precisely the things to which

1. Dr. Narang, Transformation of Sikhism.

the Sikh Gurus were most opposed. The Hill rajas such as Bhim Chand and Hari Chand are said to have threatened even Guru Teg Bahadur for his beliefs. A great number of the followers of the Sikh faith were Jats, who were looked down upon by these chiefs, and therefore the Gurus were supposed to be the leaders of only low caste Hindus, and hence to be despised. The Punjab being the first to come under the Muslim yoke, here the Muslim population was proportionately larger than in any other part of the country, and therefore less easy to contend with. The Governors of the Punjab were to certain extent free from Delhi, more fanatic, and therefore less likely to put up with the movements such as the Sikhism was. They, on the other hand, are said to have incited the Hill rajas against the Guru telling them that the successors of Guru Nanak had fallen from the essential philosophy preached by him, and degenerated into aspirants of political power.

Hill rajas

Muslims of Punjab

The general mass of the Hindus too was not such as could be made alive to the situation easily. They were more or less a dead race, which had completely forgotten the glory of its past. The centuries old galling slavery had destroyed their self-confidence. They had no well developed language except Sanskrit. But Sanskrit had long ceased to be the language of the people. Languages of the every day use were poor in literature, and hence were unable to inspire their speakers to the glories of a living race, and into a national pride and confidence.

Dead race

No language

Nearer at home, the things were yet more difficult. The family grudges continued to be the bane of the Guru *gadi*. None of the successors of Guru Nanak had been permitted to live in peace. This was a strong factor which made not an insignificant contribution towards the execution of Guru Arjan. It was because of them that Guru Teg Bahadur had to leave the Punjab, and remain in a sort of exile for a pretty long time. The persons who had made the life of Guru Teg Bahadur utterly difficult in the Punjab, were still alive

Family grudges

and majority of them continued to be a thorn by the Guru's side.¹

Corrupt
Masands

Besides, the Sikh organisation itself had by now fallen only into the hands of loose-thinking self-seekers. Guru Har Rai had died in the prime of his youth. Guru Har Krishan was a mere child to think seriously of bringing the house in order. Guru Teg Bahadar was too old, and too much pre-occupied in other things to plan seriously renovation of the entire system. The consequences were natural. The Masands had gone corrupt, and began to feel themselves strong enough to make or unmake a Guru. "They used to boast that the Guru was of their own making, and, if they did not serve him, no one would even look at him. They practised oppression in every form ; they embezzled offerings made to the Guru and committed many other enormities."² The Guru himself writes :

Guru
writes

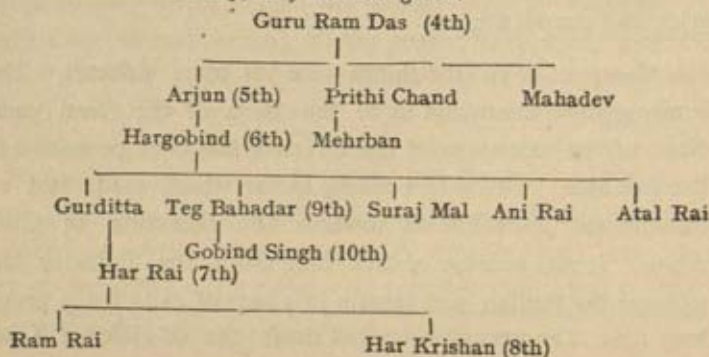
"If any one go to the masands, they will tell him to bring his property at once and give it to them.

.....
They put oil into their eyes to make people believe that they are shedding tears.

If they see any of their own worshippers wealthy, they serve up sacred food and feed him with it.

Genealogy

1. A genealogical table from the fourth Guru, under whom Guruship became hereditary, may here be given.



2. Macauliffe, v, p. 23.

If they see him without wealth, they give him nothing, though he beg for it ; they will not even show him their faces.

Those beasts plunder men, and never sing the praises of the Supreme Being.”¹

Majority of the Guru's followers were poor, and therefore offered no very good source of steady income. The Sikh army organised by Guru Hargobind, had been dispersed, and his victories in the battle field now went rather against Guru Gobind Singh in the Mughal court. As a result of the policy of peace followed by the successors of Guru Hargobind the Sikhs were getting dis-used to the military practices, and it was a problem to reorganise them to the martial tune.

There, however, also existed some factors which went to his favour. The movement which had been founded by Baba Nanak, had by this time developed into the creation of a separate sect, with its own language and scripture, with its separate beliefs and practices, and separate centres of pilgrimage, and sources of spiritual and cultural enlightenment. This new sect also had developed by the time of the tenth Guru, a sufficiently strong tradition of valour and sacrifice. And for the Guru, such a past “was not a mean asset in the glorious career upon which he was about to enter.”²

The policy of non-violence had failed. After using violence in the time of Guru Hargobind, it had been tried fully in the time of his successors. The sacrifice of Guru Teg Bahadur itself promised no lasting escape from theocratic tyranny. The silent sufferings and the sacrifice of the 9th Guru had charged the atmosphere. It had shaken some Hindu thinking minds from their age old slumber, and they were now willing to be organised for the protection of their honour and self-respect. Among the Muslims themselves, now a sort of definite division seemed to have been created. Many remained fanatic, with their proselytising zeal, specially

Poor
followers

Dispersed

Dis-used

In favour

Glorious
inheritance

Non-
violence
failed

Charged
atmosphere

Muslims
divided

1. Macauliffe, pp. 322-323.

2. Dr. Narang, pp. 129-130.

so among the ruling classes, but among the general mass of the people a process of re-examining the persecuting behaviour had commenced.

Aurangzeb
busy in
Deccan

Aurangzeb, too, was at this time busy in Deccan, and had "left the Punjab free for any enterprising spirit to mature his plans."¹ In the south, Shiva ji had succeeded and had crowned himself as a king at Raigarh in 1674. Jats near Delhi, though once beaten by the imperial forces, were continuing their resistance. The tribesmen in the north-west frontiers were raising their head and threatening the peace in the adjoining territories. There were disorderly elements in Bengal, and pirates along the Bengal coast had been keeping the Bengal Governor, Shayista Khan, busy since long. About a hundred miles south-west of Delhi, the *Satnamis* were organising themselves to make the Mughal life difficult. The Mughals were in fact on a waning glory.

Other
uprisings

Aurangzeb
hated

By
foreigners

And
Indian
Muslims

Army
demoralised

Nor had the destructive religious zeal exhibited by Aurangzeb been applauded by all the sections of the Muslim society. According to J. T. Wheeler, the religious policy followed by Aurangzeb in India, was considered anti-Islamic by the Khalifa at Mecca, who refused to receive an ambassador from the Emperor. Shah Abbas of Iran hated the religious policy of Aurangzeb likewise. And in India too, there were not few well-meaning Muslims, who considered him to be a mis-led compatriot. Some Muslims such as Pir Budu Shah, openly sided with the Guru, and gave him every assistance, material as well as physical, in the realisation of his aim. And not few of the Muslims rather enlisted themselves in the Guru's army, to fight for his cause.

The Mughal army itself was getting demoralised. Its soldiers, ill-paid mercenaries, had lost their old zeal and strength, and many deserted it in the thick of the troubles. Quite a few of them later offered themselves to fight for the Guru.

1. Dr. Narang, pp. 129-30.

Such was the state of things, when Guru Teg Bahadur broke his potsherd on the head of Aurangzeb at Delhi ; and when Gobind Rai became a young Guru. The best recruits to the Sikh faith were the Jats of Majha and the Malwa. Their character was martial, and they were great lovers of freedom. The greatest testimony to the constructive genius of the Guru was if he could seize what was vital in the situation, and as Cunningham writes, relume it with Promethean fire. The Sikh gave the Guru the ideal, the Jat the material, and combining the two, the Guru actually forged "a dynamic force, which none could hence forward ignore."¹

The jats

B—The Battle of Bhangani

The Guru writes in his *Bachitra Natak* : 'When I obtained sovereignty, I promoted religion to the best of my power. I hunted various sorts of game in the forest, and killed bears, nilguas, and elks. Afterwards I left that country, and proceeded to the city of Paunta.'² These two factors, the promotion of religion to the best of his power, and his hunting of various sorts of game, were bound to effect adversely the feelings of some Hill rajas, because, as we know, these Hills had always been a strong-hold of Hindu religion and the idol-worshippers, while the Guru was an idol-breaker. Secondly, the Guru's hunting of various sorts of game shows that before he left for Paunta, he was reviving the princely and martial practices of Guru Hargobind, and this must have caused some jealousy or apprehension in the mind of some Hill chiefs. *Bachitra Natak* does not give us an information regarding the Guru's activities at Anandpur beyond what has been quoted above. Several Sikh accounts, however, come to our aid.

The reasons

Guru writes

Hill rajas antagonised

We learn that so long as the Guru remained at Anandpur, before proceeding to Paunta, he undertook a regular plan of turning the emasculated people around him into men of valour, strong in body, mind, and spirit. For

1. I. B. Bannerji, ii, pp. 152-163.

2. *Bachitra Natak*, Section viii.

Past
re-told

the development of self-confidence and manly pride, the Guru seems to have understood the necessity of a glorious tradition. The Hindu past had been valorous and intrepid, but it had all been buried in a language which had ceased to be the language of the people since long. If their past glories were to be re-told, they had to be translated into thier current languages. And realising this, the Guru embarked upon an ambitious plan to supply that requirement. The Guru himself was poet of a high eminence, and besides, he collected around him an army of 52 poets to render the heroic tales from Sanskrit and Persian into the spoken language of the people. The warlike deeds of Rama, Krishna and Arjun were re-told in soul-inspiring and heart-stirring manner. And when they were sung in martial tunes by the court bards, a sort of electric current ran through the nerves of the listners and they were animated to perform heroic deeds. All this must have caused some anxiety in the mind of the Hill rajas.

Animation

Procla-
mation,
recruit-
ments

The Guru issued a proclamation calling upon the Sikhs, having four sons, to send at least two of them to enlist in the Guru's army. Prof. Kartar Singh writes : "The news of the Guru's fondness for warlike pastimes soon spread abroad. Persons whose fathers and grand-fathers had fought Guru Hargobind's battles flocked to the Guru's darbar. His orders went forth that of all presents the most welcome to him were horses, arms, ammunition, and other materials for military equipment. These orders were zealously obeyed. The Guru's army grew apace, and his armoury became full of weapons of various types."¹ According to Gordon, the number of soldiers in the Guru's army soon reached the figure 80,000.² The figure given by Gordon may seem too high for the initial stages, but as according to Khushwaqat Rai, the people did begin "to gather round him in exceedingly large numbers. Guru Gobind Singh called himself a king and received royal honours from his followers.....Rajas of Kehlur and Handur began

Best
presents

Large
numbers

1. Life of Guru Gobind Singh, pp. 55-56.

2. The Sikhs.

to fear that if he was allowed to continue in that way he might become too powerful for them.....For this reason they sometimes obstructed the people carrying offerings such as horses, elephants, etc. to the Guru. This was what provided the Guru with a cause for hostility with the rajas.”¹

Rajas fear

The Guru's life and daily programmes, which seemed to be aiming at some high venture, are said to have been fairly regular at this time. Thus writes Macauliffe: “The Guru, according to the custom of his predecessors, used to rise in the end of the night and perform his devotions. He particularly delighted to listen to the *Asa Ki Var*. After day-break he gave his Sikhs divine instruction and then practised martial exercises. In the afternoon he received his Sikhs, went shooting, or raced horses; and ended the evening by performing the divine service of the *Rahiras*.”²

Daily life

The Guru received ambassadors from kings and moved like an Emperor in the midst of his followers. His Sikhs from Kabul, Kandhar, Balkh, Bukhara and Ghazni, brought to him many presents peculiar to that part of the world. The costliest and the most magnificent of such presents said to have been made to him on the occasion of Baisakhi in 1680, “was a woollen tent on which were embroidered, in gold and silver numerous objects and scenes of beauty and splendour. This tent was the humble offering of a Sikh from Kabul, named Duni Chand. Others had also helped in its preparation. Its magnificence surpassed that of even the Emperor's tent.”³

Like Kings

Kabuli tent presented

Surpassed Emperor

Of all the sorts of presents, however, the Guru preferred the offerings of arms. “The Guru was overjoyed to see arms. He almost worshipped them”, as according to *Mehma I'rakash Wartak*. “One who presented him with arms could win his favour more easily than one who simply offered money, etc.”⁴ The Guru also ordered a big drum to be

Arms preferred

Big drum

1. Twarikh-i-Sikhan, p. 28.

2. Macauliffe, v p. 3.

3. Prof. Kartar Singh, p. 56.

4. Mehma Prakash Wartak, p. 150 b.

prepared, which he named as *Ranjit Nagara*. It was a sort of war-drum, which the Guru caused to be beat when he went a hunting. Such drums were generally carried with armies in those days ; and such practices, according to M' Gregor, were¹ followed only by Rajas, and it looked as if Guru had founded a separate state of his own.

Why Hill
Rajas
opposed

All this was causing a consternation in the minds of the Hill Rajas. There were said to have been other causes for this as well. The Hill Rajas were idol-worshippers, while as we have already discussed, the Guru was an idol-breaker. Moreover the Rajas knew that Aurangzeb was bent upon destroying the Sikhs, and if they allied themselves with the Guru, that would endanger their safety yet more. While on the other hand, if they accepted the Guru's mission, they would have to accept his leadership, which they did not like.

Jealousy
excited

"It was not long before" thus, writes Payne, "the growing power of Govind Singh excited the jealousy of the surrounding hill chiefs, who saw in his democratic teaching and the military zeal of his followers a serious menace to their own influence and independence. Foremost among these was Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur, who looked upon the Sikhs as upstarts, and lost no opportunity molesting them."²

Precipita-
tion

The matter was precipitated by an incident. During his visit there, we learn that Raja Ram of Assam had "implored Guru Teg Bahadur's intercession for a son, and a prince called Ratan Rai was duly born to him. Raja Ram died when his son was only seven years old. When Ratan Rai attained the age of twelve, he felt an inclination to see the son of the Guru by whose mediation he had been born. He accordingly, with his mother and several of his ministers, proceeded to Anandpur. He took with him as an offering "five horses with golden trappings, a very small but sagacious elephant, a weapon out of which five sorts of arms could be

Novel
resents

1. History of the Sikhs, vol. I.
2. A Short History of the Sikhs, p. 37.

made—first a pistol, then by pressing a spring a sword, then a lance, then a dagger, and finally a club—a throne from which, by pressing a spring, puppets emerged and played *chauper*, and drinking cup of great value, and several costly and beautiful jewels and raiment.”¹ The raja was received in great state by the Guru, and he stayed for a couple of days with him, during which he showed the Guru the working of his articles of offerings. The elephant, otherwise black as a coal, had a beautiful white stripe stretching from the tip of his trunk, along the forehead and back, right up to the tip of its tail. It waved a fan or *Chauri* over the Guru and held a jug of water in his trunk while the Guru’s feet were being washed. It wiped the Guru’s feet with a towel, placed his shoes in order, fetched the arrows shot by him, and at night, took two lighted torches in his trunk, and showed the Guru and the raja their homeward ways. The raja was of almost the same age as the Guru. He stayed with him for about five months and then departed.

Raja Bhim Chand of Kehlur, in whose state all these activities were being carried, hearing of the growing splendour of the Guru, once went to visit him at Anandpur. He was received in the *Darbar* with great honour by the Guru. On the prayer of Bhim Chand, the Guru showed him the presents from the king of Assam. The costly tent from Kabul was erected the next morning to receive the Raja in. The Raja was astonished at the magnificence of the presents shown to him, on his homeward journey his mind still more burned with envy of the Guru’s state and wealth, and he decided to secure from the Guru the possession at least of the elephant, by force or stratagem. Shortly after, the betrothal ceremony of the Raja’s son was to be performed with the daughter of raja Fateh Shah of Sringar in the present Garhwal district. Taking the opportunity, Bhim Chand sent some of his officers to the Guru, to borrow the elephant for the occasion. The Guru, however, having read the intention behind, refused to part with it. This caused a bitterness in

Bhim
Chand
visits

Astonished

Elephant
refused

1. Macauliffe, v, p. 4.

Bhim Chand's mind, and he determined to have a revenge from the Guru. His ministers, however, advised him to desist from the action, till the marriage of his son was over. As the marriage of the raja's son approached, one or two more attempts were made to secure the elephant from the Guru, but they all failed. All this charged the atmosphere.

Coward
Masands

On the other hand, when some cowards among the *Masands* learnt of all these developments, they who are said to have fattened themselves in peace and were afraid of losing their ease and comfort, felt agitated, and went to the Guru's mother, requesting her to dissuade the Guru from his war-like propensities, lest it brought some trouble to him.

It went
apace

All this, however, bore no fruit for the *Masands*, and the Guru's activities went apace. Just this time, however, another development took place. Raja Medni Prakash of Nahn, it is said, had very bitter relations with Fateh Shah of Srinagar. Fateh Shah was a strong king. He had very good relations with Ram Rai, the disinherited son of Guru Har Rai, who had developed his influence far and wide, and who, due to his super-natural powers, commanded a very good respect at the court of the Emperor Aurangzeb. Fateh Shah's matrimonial relation with the strong raja Bhim Chand, added yet further to his power and prestige. Medni Prakash, growing afraid of the ever-increasing power of Fateh Shah, decided to have friendly relations with the Guru, and therefore, invited the Guru to spend some time in his state.

Medni
Prakash
invites

Reasons

When the *Masands* learnt of it, they approached the Guru's mother once again and requested her to insist that the Guru should accept the invitation, so that he would have some respite from the growing enmity with Bhim Chand. When the Guru was approached once again, he agreed, and after some time, they all left for Nahn.

Guru
agreed

Received

The Guru was duly greeted by Raja Medni Prakash, and here again the Guru busied himself with chase and other such activities. It is said that once when the Raja went with the Guru on a hunting excursion, he told him that Fateh Shah had often quarrelled with him on the ground

where they stood, and requested the Guru to build there a fort for the protection of the state. The Guru accepted the proposal, the foundations of the fort were duly laid, and in due time, the fort was ready, which was named Paunta. The Guru abode there, and continued to increase his army and enlist Mohammadans as well as the Hindus who presented themselves for service.

Paunta fort

Ram Rai of Dehra Dun, only about thirty miles from Paunta, began to apprehend that the Guru had come there to punish him for his previous misdeeds. The Guru, however, sent a Sikh to reassure him, and shortly after, when Ram Rai and the Guru met at a middle spot, friendship between the two was established. Raja Fateh Shah of Srinagar was also advised by his ministers to be on good terms with the Guru, and he decided to visit the Guru when he had approached so near his territory. The Guru received Fateh Shah with due honour, and at his proposal, friendship between Fateh Shah and Medni Prakash was also restored.

Ram Rai met

Rajas reconciliated

The Guru after this, is said to have set about extending Paunta and beautifying it with gardens and pleasure grounds. The day fixed for marriage of Fateh Shah's daughter also approached and the Guru received an invitation from the raja to grace the occasion. The Guru, however, declined the invitation for his enmity with Bhim Chand, but promised to send his finance minister with some troops to represent him. In the meanwhile, Bhim Chand also started with the marriage party from Kehlur. He had to pass through Paunta in order to proceed to Srinagar, but since he had brought with him an unusual number of troops, as according to Bhai Vir Singh,¹ the Guru doubted his intentions, and permitted only the bridegroom and a small number of officers to cross the ferry near Paunta. The rest had to reach Srinagar by a circuitous path.

Marriage invitation

Bhim Chand refused passage

Bhim Chand was naturally enraged at this. The Guru sent Dewan Nand Chand with some troops, and some

Enraged Bhim

1. His annotated Suraj Prakash, pp. 4752-54 ; Macauliffe, v, pp. 15-25.

Guru's
presents
refused

valuable presents, including a necklace worth about a lakh and a quarter of rupees, as a wedding present for the bride. Bhim Chand threatened to return without marrying his son, if Fateh Chand accepted the Guru's presents. The result was that Nand Chand had to bring all the presents back. On his way back, Nand Chand was attacked by Bhim Chand's troops, but giving them a good fight, he was able to return unhurt. After the marriage was over, Bhim Chand held a conference with Fateh Chand and some other Hill rajas present there, such as Kirpal of Katoch, Gopal of Guler, Hari Chand of Handur and the Raja of Jaswal. They all decided to attack the Guru on their way back.

Attack

Pathans
deserted
Guru

On the other hand when the Guru got the intelligence regarding such developments, he intensified his preparations. Of the 500 Pathans enlisted by Pir Budhu Shah in Guru's army, 400 deserted him. Only Kale Khan remained loyal to him with one hundred Pathans under his command. The 400 Pathans joined the already very large army of the Hill rajas, and encouraged these chiefs by saying that 'The Guru's main dependence is on us. The rest of his army is a miscellaneous rabble who have never seen war, and will run away when they hear the first shot fired.' They joined the Hill rajas' army without pay, but with a promise that they would be permitted to plunder the riches of the Guru. The Udasis also fled hearing of the approaching war. Only one of them, Mahant Kirpal, remained with the Guru. Budhu Shah was immediately informed of the misconduct of the Pathans, who, to wipe away this disgrace, placed himself, his brother, his four sons, and seven hundred disciples at the Guru's disposal. The Guru selected Bhangani, six miles distant from Paunta as the battle-field, and marched his forces thither. The battle was fought, in which the combined forces of all the hill chiefs were defeated, and the Guru immediately after that returned to Anandpur, as he himself writes: "when I returned after the victory I did not remain at Paunta. I went to Kahlur and there established the village of

Udasis fled

Disgrace
wiped by
Budhu
Shah

Anandpur."¹

Now almost all the Sikh accounts agree with the circumstances leading to the battle of Bhangani as given above. There are, however, certain points brought out by Dr. Bannerji, which as he implies, almost all of them seem to have failed in comprehending. These accounts are almost unanimous that the Guru left Anandpur just on the eve of the marriage of the son of Bhim Chand, and came back to that place just after it; which means that the Guru's stay at Paunta was just nominal. The activities of the Guru at Paunta given by these accounts, and the Guru's construction of the fort of Paunta etc., however, are so varied that they could not be compressed within that short period, if the Guru went there just before the marriage and returned just after it. We have, therefore, "very good reasons to believe that he made somewhat protracted stay at Paunta,"² writes Dr. Bannerji. Since we are pretty certain, as the Guru himself writes about it, that he returned to Anandpur immediately after the battle, which was fought immediately after the marriage, the first point raised is that the Guru should definitely not have gone to Paunta just before the marriage. And if this is so, the entire story that the bitterness between the Guru and Bhim Chand grew as a result of the Guru's refusal to lend the elephant on the marriage of his son, falls to the ground. Secondly, concluding from the Guru's words that after the battle of Bhangani, 'I did not remain at Paunta. I went to Kahlur and there established the village of Anandpur,' Dr. Bannerji writes that if the Guru established the Anandpur after the battle, "it clearly indicates that the Guru's earlier stay at Anandpur—Makhawal was purely nominal and that it was made the real centre of his activities after the battle of Bhangani."³

Taking the second of Dr. Bannerji's points first, we must say that it does not seem to be very strong. If we

Bannerji's
points

First point

Second
point

Nominal
stay

Second not-
strong

1. Bachitra Natak, Section viii.
2. Dr. Bannerji, ii, pp. 69-70.
3. Dr. Bannerji, ii, p. 70.

Anandpur
stayNot
nominal

1st point

Possible
solution

can conclude from the above quoted statement of the Guru that his earlier stay at Anandpur was nominal, we can conclude from his earlier statement in the beginning of his account of the battle that it was not so, because therein he writes that after obtaining the sovereignty, he conducted religious affairs to the best of knowledge, and hunted various sorts of game in the forests. When the Guru's father died, he was at Anandpur, and was only nine years of age. Under such circumstances it was not possible for the boy Guru to leave the secluded hills and come back to the plains. He must thus have continued at Anandpur, and if he conducted religious affairs, and hunted various sorts of game, obviously he could not have done all that, and be a cause of bitterness with Bhim Chand, at that young age. He must have stayed at Anandpur for a considerable time till he matured in his age and ideas as the Sikh traditions almost unanimously hold. It is, however, possible that after the Guru left Anandpur for Paunta, the former should have lost much of its importance, which was re-established after his return.

As to the first point, there exists a very strong Sikh tradition, which connects the bitterness between the Guru and Bhim Chand, with the marriage of the latter's son. There is one possible solution for the problem posed by Dr. Bannerji, which he perhaps has failed to perceive. That is, we might say that Bhim Chand tried to borrow the elephant at his son's betrothal, and not at the marriage. The Guru's refusal to part with it caused bitterness, and at Medni Prakash's invitation he left Anandpur. The marriage was performed quite a good time after the betrothal, as it has been the custom among the Indians, and by that time, the Guru should have carried all his activities at Paunta. If this is correct, there might be some truth in Prof. Kartar Singh's words that the Guru remained absent from Anandpur for a little over three years.²

The third point raised by Dr. Bannerji, however, seems

1. Dr. Bannerji, ii, p. 70.

2. The Life of Guru Gobind Singh, p. 93.

to be very significant. The Sikh tradition makes the Guru's bitterness with Bhim Chand, as the main and the immediate cause of the battle of Bhangani, and it is very curious indeed that in the account of the battle given by the Guru himself in his *Bachitra Natak*, he does not mention the name of Bhim Chand even once. Regarding the cause of the battle, the Guru merely says in his *Bachitra Natak*, after reaching Paunta : "There I hunted and killed many lions, nilgaus and bears. Fateh Shah, the king, became angry and came to blows with me without any reason." And immediately after this, the account of the battle follows : "There Sri Shah raged and the five stately heroes took their position firmly on the field of battle". In the body of the account too, whereas the Guru mentions the names of the petty chiefs, such as the Rajas of Jaswal, Dadhwal and Chandel, there is nowhere a mention of the name of Bhim Chand, who is supposed to have been the main cause of the battle. There is every possibility, therefore, that the main cause of the battle was the Guru's relations with Fateh Shah. In the battle Fateh Shah was joined by several other Hill Rajas, but not by Bhim Chand.

Third point
significant

Fateh shah,
not Bhim

The account may possibly be given like this. The Guru in the earlier part of his life remained at Anandpur for a pretty long time, where he developed some bitterness with Bhim Chand. The Guru received an invitation from Medni Prakash, and his mother and others advised him to leave Anandpur for sometime and accept the invitation. At Paunta, the Guru established friendship with Medni Prakash and Fateh Shah. Later on, however, as the Guru obstructed the passage of Bhim Chand's marriage party for obvious reasons, the latter, who was already bitter, prevailed upon Fateh Shah, to break with the Guru. The marriage was duly performed, and Bhim Chand returned to his state. As the friendly relations between the Guru and Fateh Shah had already been broken, the Guru somehow got involved in some boundary dispute between Medni Prakash and Fateh Shah, perhaps immediately after the marriage. The progressive activities of

Possible
account

Fought in
1686

the Guru, were not liked by the staunch Hindu chiefs of the Hills, who joined Fateh Shah against the Guru, and thus the battle started, in which the Guru was victorious. This battle, according to Sunder Singh, was fought about the year 1686.¹

The results
of victory

After this victory, the Guru was in a stronger position. His Sikhs, as according to Sukha Singh, were so overjoyed that they actually made wild plans of attacking Srinagar and Delhi.² The Guru then decided to return to Anandpur. The Sikhs committed several acts of hostility against Bhim Chand, carried several raids in his territory, as both Gur Bilas and Suraj Prakash mention. The Guru's grand victory at Bhangani, had considerably cowed down Bhim Chand, and he dared not come out openly to challenge the Sikhs. Besides, he was also facing certain troubles at the hands of the Mughal authorities. The Guru's fame was spreading, Macauliffe writes, and therefore when he came back to Anandpur, Bhim Chand was advised to sue for peace. He made an offer, the both met, and now friendship was restored between the two, which served a common cause of the hill chiefs in a battle, the account of which will follow.

Bhim sued
for peace

Towards
clash with
Mughals

The battle of Bhangani is said to be an event which set the ball rolling towards a major clash between the Guru and the Mughals. The Mughals had thought that the Guru would be destroyed in his clash with the Hill rajas, and according to some accounts, they had encouraged these chiefs towards this direction. But this battle convinced them that the Guru was getting too formidable a power. They lost their confidence in the Hill rajas as a weapon against the Guru, and it was doubtful if these chiefs would now occupy the same privileged position in the Mughal eyes. The politics which ensued as a result of this battle was therefore confused. And the Hill rajas in this, proved to be perfectly immature politicians, buffeted about like pebbles on the sea

Immature
politicians

1. See his 'The Battles of Guru Gobind Singh', p. 11.

2. Gur Bilas, p. 159.

shore, sometimes aligning themselves with this power, and sometimes with that.

Another result of this battle was that the belief of the Sikhs in the super-natural power of the Guru was established. The Guru had won a great victory, yet he did not acquire an inch of land, or subdue a state, exterminate its authorities and establish a political power. This disinterestedness of the Guru, spread his fame far and wide, and people flocked around him in ever greater numbers. The Guru's arms supply increased, and a large number of people offered themselves to be enrolled in the Guru's army.

Guru's
prestige
increased

The battle of Bhangani also gave the Guru an opportunity of understanding the real character of some of his followers. The wicked and dishonest people, who had joined the Guru, merely for the sake of some booty, or to fatten themselves in peace at the Guru's expense, were going to have no room with the Guru. And the Guru himself writes that after he returned to Anandpur : "Those who had kept themselves away from the battle, I drove out of the place; and I patronised those who had distinguished themselves there. Many days passed in this way and I fostered the faithful and rooted out all the wicked."¹

Understood
real
characters.

C — The Battle of Nadaun

These Hill states about which we have been talking, had been brought under control by Akbar, and later by Todar Mal, who annexed the fertile tracts, but left the bare hills as tributary states. Although these states continued to be treated liberally, yet all of them had to keep a prince each at the Mughal court as a hostage for their good conduct, and pay their regular tributes every year. This state of affairs continued till the time of Aurangzeb, under whom the situation changed. The Emperor was kept busy in the Deccan for a pretty long time, during which, great administrative irregularities commenced in the north, which weakened the central hold on this part of the country. These Hill states also seem to

Hill
chiefs'
relations
with
Mughals.

1. *Bachitra Natak*, Section viii; Dr. Bannerji, ii, p. 180.

have been encouraged by the situation, and they started refusing to pay the annual tribute. They were encouraged in this attitude by another factor. According to Dr. Narang, the defeat of the Hill chiefs in the battle of Bhangani, resulted in the change of their attitude towards the Guru's mission, and they began to regard it with the seriousness it deserved. They entered into offensive and defensive alliance with him,¹ and this encouraged them yet further in refusing to pay their annual tribute. And this resulted in the battle of Nadaun.

Alliance
with Guru

Alaf Khan
came

Mian Khan, an imperial commander, went to Jammu, and therefrom sent his assistant Alaf Khan to realise the tribute from the hill chiefs. Raja Kirpal Chand of Kangra and Dyal of Bijarwal, paid the tribute, and the former advised Alaf Khan that Bhim Chand being the strongest Hill raja, if he could realise the tribute from him, the rest would pay it automatically. Alaf Khan took this advice, demanded the tribute from Bhim Chand, but getting a refusal, he prepared for the battle. Bhim Chand approached the Guru for assistance who was on friendly terms with him, and he was only too glad to help him in this movement towards liberation.

Guru
approached

At Nadaun

Alaf Khan, together with his allies, Raja Kirpal and Dayal, took his position on an eminence near the town of Nadaun, 20 miles south-east of Kangra, on the left bank of the Beas. On the other side, Bhim Chand, joined by the Guru, Raja Sukhdev of Jasrot, Pirthi Chand of Dadhwar, Raj Singh and Ram Singh, marched to the battle-field. The Guru gives a short account of the battle in his *Bachitra Natak*. Bhim Chand opened the attack, but the position of the enemy being on an eminence, the arrows and shots of his soldiers struck only the wooden rafters below. Kirpal and Dyal repulsed the attack. Bhim Chand led another attack, invoking the help of the monkey-god, Hanuman. Kirpal and Dayal came out of their fortress, and a furious battle raged inflicting heavy loss on both the sides. The troops of Bhim Chand seemed to be swerving. Raja Dyal seemed to be plying his arrows with great effect. Seeing the situation critical, the

1. Transformation of Sikhism, p. 154.

Guru advanced. He writes: "Then this Thy insignificant creature (the Guru) took up his gun and aimed it at the heart of a raja. Fighting bravely he tottered to the ground. Even when falling the proud warrior in his rage shouted 'kill'. I put aside the gun and took up my bow, shot four arrows with my right hand and three with my left. I could not see whether they struck any body. By that time God turned the battle in our favour. The enemy was driven into the river. Arrows and bullets flew in abundance as if the warriors were playing 'holy.'"¹

Guru
moved

The Guru continues the account. Alaf Khan fled from the battlefield and all the other heroes retreated precipitately. The Guru remained on the bank of the river for eight days, then he visited the palaces of the various Rajas and returned home. Then towards the end he writes: "The two parties came to terms and therefore the story ends. I came back hereafter having plundered Alsum (on my way back) and having reached Anandpur, enjoyed myself in various ways."²

Alaf
defeated

To terms
Alsum
plundered

The last sentences of the Guru raise two new questions. It is not clear what "two parties came to terms" implied. Did it refer to certain differences between some two parties of the Hill rajas which were removed, or was it that the differences between Bhim Chand and his party on the one side, and Alaf Khan on the other side, which were removed? The latter part of the above statement seems to be more probable. For we know that after the battle of Nadaun, Bhim Chand understanding the futility of the hostility with the Mughals, did make his submission to the authorities. And moreover since it is the story of the conflict between Bhim Chand and Alaf Khan that the Guru is narrating, his words that the "two parties came to terms and therefore the story ends," does seem to refer to the end of hostilities between Bhim Chand and Alaf Khan which ended the story.

Who to
terms?

Bhim and
Alaf

Regarding the Guru's plunder of Alsum, however, the

1. Bachitra Natak, Section ix.

2. Ibid.

Alsun
plundered

Possible
view

position is not clear. Alsun, according to Macauliffe, was a village situated within the territories of Raja Bhim Chand, and Dr. Bannerji hints at the possibility of its plunder as a mark of the Guru's retaliation against Bhim Chand, who made his submission before Alaf Khan despite his victory. But according to Gian Singh, the inhabitants of Alsun had thrice before looted a few Sikhs, and now again insulted some of them, which resulted in their plunder.¹ Suraj Prakash also hints at the loot of the Sikh Sangat in that village.² Moreover if the Guru had differences with Bhim Chand, it seems difficult to understand why he should have plundered some of his innocent people in that village, as Dr. Bannerji implies. Such practices were foreign to the Guru's character. And we must therefore accept the view of Gian Singh in this respect. The battle of Nadaun, according to Sunder Singh, was fought about the year 1687.

D—The Expedition of the Khanzada

Dilawar's
son comes

After this the Guru spent some years in peace, putting his house in order. Bhim Chand and several other Hill chiefs had made their submissions, and the Guru alone now remained to be subdued by the Mughals. As the fame of the Guru was spreading and number of recruits in his army was increasing, the Mughal authorities thought it prudent to curb the Guru's rising power. Accordingly, Dilawar Khan sent his son against the Guru. Macauliffe writes: "One Dilawar Khan, who had attained power in the Punjab during the insurrections which arose while Aurangzeb was employed in the Dakhan, became jealous of the Guru's fame and success, and sent his son with a force of one thousand men to exact tribute from him. If he refused, then Anandpur was to be sacked. When this was accomplished, Dilawar's son was to take tribute in a similar manner from all the hill rajas."³ It seems, however, difficult to take Dilawar Khan,

Who is
Dilawar ?

1. Twarikh Guru Khalsa, pp. 459-60.

2. Rut 3, Ansu 33, Ank 3 to 6.

3. Macauliffe, v, p. 55.

as Macauliffe would like us to have him. Narang¹ considers Dilawar Khan to be the Governor of Lahore, while Panth Prakash² considers him to be the Governor of Kashmir. According to Suraj Prakash, he was a *Panjhazari Sardar*.³ Whatever position Dilawar Khan occupied, it obviously seems most probable that he was a Mughal officer, and not a man who had attained power during the insurrection, as Macauliffe writes. The further proof of this is that the expedition of Alaf Khan, then those sent by Dilawar Khan, all seem to be a part of the chain, all of which having failed, the news reached Aurangzeb and the chain ended with the Emperor sending one of his own sons to subdue the hill chiefs, as we shall shortly study. Obviously if Dilawar Khan was not a Mughal officer, his efforts should not have ended in the emperor sending his own son with an expedition.

A Mughal
officer

From the Guru's account of the expedition of the son of Dilawar Khan, we learn that the plan of the Mughals was to take the Guru by surprise. The enemy troops crossed the Sutlej just before midnight. And just this time a Guru's scout ran to inform him. Alam, a '*deorhidar*' awoke the Guru up, and immediately a sound of alarm was made. Everybody stirred up and took up his arms with a fiery zeal. The enemy troops seem to have already been tired by the day's march, and were almost numbed with the coldness of the water. They were unprepared, when the Sikhs suddenly discharged volleys of shots. Drums beat, bugles blew, soldiers thundered, and the guns roared. It was a dreadful appearance, "and the bloody Khans fled with their weapons unused." While fleeing away, they plundered the village Barwan, stayed for sometime at Bhalan, and then returned to Dilawar Khan. Thus the Guru got the victory without a fight, as he writes: "Through God's favour, the wretched fools could not even touch me, and they fled."⁴

Guru awoke

Enemy fled

1. Narang, p. 154.

2. Panth Prakash, xxiv, p. 8.

3. Suraj Prakash, p. 4849.

4. Bachitra Natak, Section x.

E—The Expedition of Hussain KhanDilawar's
slave

Soon Dilawar Khan's son reached back and hung his head in shame. Thereupon, Hussain, a slave of Dilawar, offered to march against the Guru. Dilawar sent him with a large army to bring the Guru under subjection. Hussain proceeded with fury, and on his way he brought the raja of Dhadwal completely under his control, making slaves of his sons. He also plundered Dun. Kirpal Chand of Kangra had already paid his tribute, faithless raja Bhim Chand cast his lot with Hussain, and all the three proceeded towards Anandpur. The Guru also made his preparation, but here an incident occurred, which entirely changed the future course of developments.

An incident

Gopal

Raja Gopal of Guler, hearing of the submission of Bhim Chand and Kirpal, proceeded to negotiate with Hussain. But the slave having the rajas of Kehlur and Katoch by his side, considered himself to be peerless in the world, and extremely flattered and blind in vanity, did not even condescend to notice the raja of Guler. Gopal had gone along with Raja Ram Singh of Jaswal, and took with him some money to pay to Hussain, but the latter was not prepared to accept anything less than ten thousand rupees. Gopal refused to pay that sum and came back. Hussain became angry, and without pausing to take care of any tactical considerations, laid siege to the town of Guler. The inhabitants of the town being soon reduced to straits, Gopal sued for peace, but Hussain would not accept anything less than ten thousand rupees as the condition for it.

Besieged

Sangtia's
mediation
failed

Thereupon, Gopal approached the Guru, who sent Sangtia and seven other Sikhs. Sangtia re-opened the negotiations with Hussain in Gopal's behalf, and brought the latter on his security, to the Hussain's camp. The two sides, however, once again failed to reach an agreement. Kirpal and Bhim Chand began to conspire to arrest Gopal but the latter getting the scent, escaped in time. Kirpal, at this, raged in fury, and he together with Himmat and Hussain, immediately marched on the city, and the fight commenced with indescribable vehe-

mence. Hussain killed a lot of enemy's soldiers. Shortly after, however, some of Gopal's soldiers crying 'kill, kill,' fell upon him, an arrow struck Hussain, and he fell down dead. After this Raja Kirpal also fell fighting, and several of their brave officers, such as Himmat and Kimmat also fell. On the side of Gopal too, there was a heavy loss, and Sangat also died fighting together with his seven companions.

Hussain
defeated

Thus was Gopal able to get the victory. The Guru writes :

*"Gopal was victorious and the battle came to an end. Everybody then went home and the rain of bullets that was originally intended for me was showered by the Almighty elsewhere."*¹

Guru saved

F—Expedition of Jujhar Singh

At this catastrophe, Dilawar Khan became still more angry, and decided to send yet another expedition under Jhujar Singh. When Jhujar Singh, however, reached Bhalan, Gaj Singh of Jaswal mobilised his troops and fell upon him early in the morning. Jhujar Singh fought like a hero, but was soon surrounded from all sides. He, however, without any hesitation, rushed into the enemy's ranks, and wielding his weapon with great dexterity, killed many valiant soldiers, but at last, he himself fell dead, and the battle thus ended.²

Gaj Singh

Defeated
him

G—Shahzada leads the Expedition

The news of the repeated failures of the expeditions against the Guru, reached Aurangzeb in Deccan. At this Aurangzeb became very angry and sent one of his own sons, prince Muazim, afterwards known as Bahadur Shah, for the restoration of order in the Hills. The people were frightened and they fled to the hills. Many deserted the Guru as well, and some tried even to frighten him. But as the Guru writes: "They did not understand the ways of the Almighty."³ The prince himself stayed

Muazim
comes

1. Bachitra Natak, Section xi.

2. Ibid, Section xii.

3. Ibid, Section xiii.

Mirza Beg
and others

at Lahore, and sent a Mughal officer, named Mirza Beg, to wreak vengeance on the hills. The Guru continues: "Then Aurangzeb's son became very angry, and he sent a subordinate officer to pull down the habitations of those who had left me. *Both Guru Nanak's and Babar's successors have been set up by God. The former should be regarded as spiritual kings and the latter as temporal kings.* The Babar's descendants shall exact money forcibly from those who did not pay Guru Nanak's dues. They shall punish them and loot their villages completely." And then after Mirza Beg had destroyed the homes of the apostates, the prince sent four more officers, who "plundered the houses of the apostates; who had escaped destruction at Mirza Beg Khan's hand."¹

Plundered
apostates

Rajas
ill-treated

Dr. Narang also writes that "The Rajas were taught a severe lesson by Mirza Beg, the imperial general. He inflicted upon them defeat after defeat, gave up their country to plunder, set to fire villages, took hundreds of prisoners and in order to make a lesson of them had them shaved clean, and their faces blackened, seated them on donkeys and made an exhibition of them throughout the disturbed area."² Commenting on this Dr. Bannerji writes: "We, however, find it difficult to accept these details though there cannot possibly be any doubt that the Rajas were taught a severe lesson on this occasion." Moreover the Guru's object seems to have been to preach "a homily on loyalty to one's spiritual guide, and therefore we need not take his words as literally true....." "Guru's main object in introducing this topic seems to have been to read a lesson on apostasy....."³

Lesson on
apostasy ?

Not correct

So far as the first part of Dr. Bannerji's statement is concerned, we may not have to say much on this, but on the second part of it, we find difficult to agree. Dr. Bannerji himself agrees with the views of Sukha Singh that the reason which contributed in the Guru's escape from a trouble at the

1. Bachitra Natak, Section xlii.

2. Narang, p 156.

3. Bannerji, ii, pp. 90 91.

prince's hands—although the Guru did apprehend this trouble, as is proved from his letter dated Sambat 1753 or 1696 A. D., which he addressed to Rama and Tiloka, the ancestors of the later rulers of the Phulkian states, requesting them to send some soldiers for his assistance — seem to be the successful pleading in the Guru's behalf, of a Khatri of Delhi named Nand Chand, who possessed some influence with the Prince.¹ But he does not seem to have perceived another very strong probability, from which we find it difficult to escape. In fact, there seems no reason for us to agree with Dr. Bannerji that the Guru's purpose in his account is "to read a lesson on apostasy." There seems infact absolutely no confusion in the Guru's statement quoted above, which clearly implies that all those who deserted the Guru were purposely destroyed by the Prince's officers. The Guru's influence had spread far and wide, and as Aurangzeb's last days could not be far ahead, there is every probability that to win the Guru's favour, which was later actually helpful to the Prince in securing the throne, he, with or without an understanding with the Guru, did order to destroy all the Guru's enemies.²

To win
Guru's
favour

The letter which the Guru addressed to Rama and Tiloka is dated Sambat 1753 or 1696 A. D. Obviously the Prince came to the Punjab in that year, and the battle with Hussain should have been fought about the year 1695, as the Guru himself says that the Prince came soon after this battle.

Prince
came 1696

Hussain
1695

H—Battle with Alam Chand and Balia Chand.

Soon after, the Guru himself was called upon to fight an action. The neighbouring Hill chiefs were jealous of the growing power of the Guru. Besides, the repeated raids of the Sikhs in the hostile territories, constantly reminded some of the chiefs of the growing danger. And therefore they were always in the search of an opportunity to do a short work of the Guru.

The raids

One day, it is said, when the the Guru went out ahunting in the Dun, with only a small number of the Sikhs, two

Hunting in
Dun

1. Sukha Singh, *Gur Bilas*, pp 171-173, 334-335.

2. See Sunder Singh, *The Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 19-21.

Attacked

Hill chiefs, Alam Chand and Balia Chand, finding an easy opportunity, fell upon him. The Sikhs, a small number of them, as it was, gave a determined fight, but being too few, had to retreat a little, at the face of a strong opposition from the enemy. The Guru, seeing this, advanced, and the Sikhs gathering courage resumed the fight. In the meanwhile, a timely reinforcement under Ude Singh also arrived, and the situation was saved. Alam Chand lost his right arm, and left the field. Balia Chand continued, but he too later fell down wounded, and their soldiers took to heels. The Guru returned victorious.

Guru
victorious

CHAPTER XVII

THE CREATION OF KHALSA

On the day of Baisakhi in 1699, there occurred a revolution in the Punjab. On this day at Keshgarh in Anandpur, a new nation was created by Guru Gobind Singh, a nation of warriors who, thus writes Indu Bhushan Bannerji, "blunted the edge of the Abdali's aggressive power, which even the Marathas had failed to resist, and turned the great triumph of Panipat into a barren victory". It would be interesting to study the circumstances which necessitated this creation.

Circumstances

At the time Guru Gobind Singh was born, India was being ruled by Aurangzeb, a religious fanatic whose will was the law of the land, and under whom, thus writes Dr. Narang, "temples were razed to the ground, sacred threads were broken and Hindus were compelled to embrace Islam. Although the masses of Hindus were bitter against the galling yoke of tyranny, the so-called natural leaders of the people were most officially loyal to the throne and most bitterly hostile to all progressive movements". Since the fall of Anangpall, no political leader had arisen in the Punjab and the Hindus had indeed "ceased to exist as a political power." It was very essential that this ancient race of India, with the glories of Vedas and Upanishads, the heroic deeds of Rama and Lakshman, studded as precious jewels in its Historical past, should be taught to develop confidence in itself and be filled with lofty although fitful longing for social freedom and national ascendancy.

Tyrannical rule

The need

During the pre-Khalsa period, the Guru seems to have entered into fraternity of Hill Rajas as one of equals and had completely identified himself with them when they rose in rebellion against Mughals. The combined armies of the Hill rajas and of the Guru, gave a crushing defeat to Mian

Hill Rajas
unreliable

Khan and Alif Khan, at Nidhaon. This political unity between the Guru and the Hill rajas, however was not destined to last long. Soon after this, the Hill chiefs received threatening letters from Dilawar Khan, and they chose to dissociate themselves from the Guru, to win the favour of the supreme rulers. The Guru, however, although being overtaken by surprise, defeated a huge force sent by Dilawar Khan under his son Lo Khan, single handedly. Whereas on the one hand, this incident encouraged the Guru's Sikhs for their valour, on the other hand it brought a conviction to the Guru that if the great power like that of the Mughals was successfully to be challenged, the Sikhs must have a reliance upon none else but their own power and resources.

Need of
self-
reliance

Masand
disin-
tegration

Another circumstance leading to the creation of Khalsa was a hopeless disintegration among Sikhs themselves. The institution of *Masands* which had been organised by Guru Arjan to carry Guru Nanak's message of purity, modesty and God-realisation, far and wide in India, had fallen into decadence. Guru Gobind Singh himself wrote about them :

"If any one serve the masands, they will say, 'Fetch and give us all thine offerings.

Go at once and make a present to us of whatever property is in thy house.

'Think on us night and day, and mention not others even by mistake.'

*If they hear of any one giving, they run to him even at night, they are not at all pleased at not receiving."*¹

The
complaints

Macauliffe writes : "The Guru continued to receive many complaints against the masands. One of them in particular billeted himself on a poor Sikh, and claimed sweets instead of crushed pulse and unleavened bread which formed the staple food of his host. The masand took the bread, threw it into his host's face, and dashed the crushed pulse on the ground. He then began to abuse the Sikh, and would

not cease until the poor man had sold his wife's petticoat to provide him with sweets One day a company of mimes went to perform before the Guru. He ordered them to imitate the masands. One of them accordingly dressed as a masand, two as a masand's servants, and a fourth as a masand's courtesan riding behind him on horse-back as he went to collect offerings for the Guru. The mimes portrayed to life the villanies and oppressions practiced by the masands. The Guru upon this finally resolved to free his Sikhs from their tyranny. He ordered that all the masands should be arraigned for their misdemeanours. He listened in every case to their defences and explanations, punished those whom he found guilty, and pardoned those who succeeded in establishing their innocence."¹ According to one view, the Guru thus destroyed about 2,200 *Masands* in boiling oil and by other torments. That such great number of men were thus destroyed, may not seem credible, as Dr. Bannerji writes,² yet the Sikh records are almost unanimous that punishments were awarded to many, and the order of *Masands* was abolished for ever.

Mimes perform

Resolve

2,200 destroyed

The Guru, however, was not satisfied at that. Although those who exploited the Sikhs had thus to be punished, the Guru felt that such maladies could not be uprooted unless the courage and understanding of the victims themselves were raised. This required some drastic action, which the Guru had to take.

Victims to be raised

Then there was the problem of the dissentient sects. The *Minas*, *Dhirmalias* and *Ram Rayees* had repeatedly created troubles for the Guru's predecessors. Prithia in complicity with Chandu Shah, had been an important factor which led to the execution of Guru Arjan. Prithia's son Mihrban had been a bitter enemy of Guru Hargobind. It was, again, to escape the jealous and hostile activities of these dissentient sects that Guru Teg Bahadur had for some time to leave

Dissentient sects

1. Macaliffe, v, p. 86.

2. Bannerji, ii, p. 111.

Punjab and go off to Assam. Peaceful approach towards them had failed.

The shackles of Caste

No nationalism

And again, though the teachings of his predecessors and the unique examples of martyrdom had elevated the spirits of the Sikhs, the old social shackles of the Hindu community, such as caste system, had not yet been completely broken. This, writes Dr. Ganda Singh, "hindered the growth of a homogeneous well-knit class of people inspired by a common national ideal. In fact, the idea of nationalism had not yet been born in this community. The ancient idea of the division of labour had created among the people well marked groups and classes which, with the passage of time, had developed into rigid castes with deep-rooted prejudices. The Sikh institutions of *Sangat* and *Pangat* had gone a long way towards demolishing caste. But the difference in the social level of the low-caste Sudras and the highborn Brahmins and Kshatriyas was so great that"¹ this also required a drastic action to be removed.

Renaissance had occurred

Political reform, as it is said, must always be preceded by a general renaissance and awakening, and this latter, had already been brought by the predecessors of Guru Gobind Singh. "The work of religious and social instructions had now been carried on for more than two centuries."² Guru Nanak had revolted against the age old institutions of caste and *Sati*. Sikhs had been taught not to believe in the system of pilgrimages and idol worship. Guru Hargobind had taught them how to fight for the protection of their self-respect. By the time of Guru Gobind Singh, a definite code of conduct had been given to the Sikhs, a definite philosophy preached among them, a definite language and script and a definite scripture had been given to them. All this separated the Sikh community from rest of the population. "And it was now time to give this community a definite organisation," which Guru Gobind Singh did.

1. Spokesman, Baisakhi No. 1958, p. 13.

2. Sunder Singh, p. 24.

And lastly, the Guru had a mission with which he was born. He was performing penance on the mountains of Hem Kund, writes he in his *Bachitra Natak*, and by his great austerities, had become one with Lord, who ordered him to assume birth. The Lord had told him how He had sent many *Sakhis*, *Sidhs*, *Rikhis* and *Prophets* to propagate His religion in the world, but they all had become absorbed in themselves. He now ordered the Guru to go and preach a religion in which people believed in one God, the Eternal and Endless. He also ordained him to save the saints and extirpate the tyrants. And if the tyrants were to be extirpated, which seems to be a new note struck in the philosophy of the Sikh religion, a resort to the sword had to be taken, and a race of warriors had to be created.

A mission

"Guru Gobind Singh," thus writes Prof. Abdul Majid Khan, "saw that the people of the Punjab were slaves of prejudice, pride and passion and that they attached undue importance to theological disputes, conventions and customs, with the result that either they were unbalanced or steeped in sloth. So, the situation was pretty hopeless and the atmosphere was very depressing. Political tyranny of the Mughals, shackles of the caste system, and vested interests of the obscurantist and obstructionist religious fraternities were the odds he had to contend withGuru Gobind Singh put an end to all hazy indetermination, impotent rage and idle dreams of the sluggards and the cowards."¹ And realising as *Gur Bilas* says, that the *Kalyug* had reached that stage, where stone must be returned with stone, the Guru resolved upon doing as the circumstances commanded.

A view

Situation
summed upKalyug's
stage

On the day before the first of *Baisakh*, *Sambat* 1756, corresponding to April, 1699, the Guru convened a large gathering, in the open air at Keshgarh, near Anandpur. On this day, the Sikhs had been invited by special *hukamnamas* from far off places. Divine music was sung, and as the chanting of *Asa-Di-War* concluded, the Guru retired inside

Baisakhi of
1699

1. Spokesman, Biasakhi No. 1958, p. 27.

Amazing
call

Daya Ram
answered it

Dharam
Das

Muhkam
Chand

Sahib
Chand
Himmat
Rai

New
appearance

the tent. Shortly after he came out, and brandishing his sword aloft, he addressed the assembly : 'My devoted friends, this goddess is daily clamouring for the head of a dear Sikh. Is there any one among you all, ready to lay down his life at a call from me ?' It was an amazing call, there was a deep silence, and everybody wondered as to what the Guru was upto. At last Bhai Daya Ram, a thirty years old *Khatri* of Lahore stood up and bowing himself before the Guru, he offered his head. The Guru seized the man by the arm, dragged him with apparent hurry and violence. There was a thud inside, the people heard it, and the next moment the Guru walked out with his sword aloft dripping with blood, and repeated the same amazing call. The people stupefied with horror got convinced that actually a murder had taken place. A dead silence followed again, and now Bhai Dharm Das, a thirty-three years old Jat of Delhi, stood up and offered himself. He was also dragged in likewise. The Guru came out and gave the third call. Some people felt that the Guru had gone mad, and they began to fritter away. Amidst the death-like silence, now the third man, Bhai Muhkam Chand, a thirty-six years old washerman of Dwarka, offered himself. The Guru came out with his dripping sword, and gave the fourth call, and thus repeating the process, he gave the fifth call. On the fourth call, thirty-seven years old Bhai Sahib Chand of Bidar, a barbar by caste ; and on his fifth call, thirty-eight years old, Bhai Himmat Rai of Jagannath, a water-carrier (*Kahar*) by caste, offered themselves.

After taking the fifth man inside, the Guru now took longer time to come out. And at last when he came out, thank Lord, his sword was sheathed, but to the amazement of the people again, "his face was beaming with joy and satisfaction, and his eyes were drunk with the cheer which filled his heart." And behind him walked they, who had apparently been killed. "They were all dressed like the master in saffron dyed garments. Their faces, their dress,

and their whole appearance, were all like the Master's. There was, on their faces, a glow which appeared to be a reflection to the light that illuminated the Guru's face. They had given him their heads, and he had given them himself and his glory."¹

The next day, on the day of Baisakhi, the Sangat assembled again, every body with inquisitive anxieties in his mind. The Guru came dressed all in white and sat on the throne. The five Sikhs who had offered their heads, were now initiated by him in the new manner which he introduced. In the time of Guru Nanak, the Sikhs used to be initiated by giving them to drink the water which had been touched with the Guru's toe. This was to develop in them humility. In the time of Guru Arjan, water placed under the Guru's manja began to be administered for the purpose. But now the times had been changed. Now fearless bravery and skill in arms were required to meet the challenges to one's faith. The manner of initiation which the Guru now adopted, was calculated to give the Sikhs courage, fortitude and will to face the trials of an honourable life.

Initiation

Old practices

Changed time

The five Sikhs, now called *Panj Piyaras*, or Beloved Five, were asked to stand up, fixing their thoughts on the Almighty, and their gaze on the Guru; while the Guru taking pure water in an iron vessel, kept stirring it with *Khanda*, or a two-edged dagger, till the hymns prescribed for the ceremony² were chanted. The substitution of dagger for the toe had its obvious significance, which was to make them brave in arms. The iron vessel signified strength of heart and mind. The chanting of hymns was meant for giving the Sikhs a faith in their religion and on the Almighty Lord. Now to this were added sugar crystals, called *patashas*, which, incidentally, the Guru's wife, Mata Sahib Kaur brought in at the moment. This was meant to bless the initiates, besides with courage and strength "with the grace of womanly

Nectar prepared

Significance

Sweet and brave

1. Prof. Kartar Singh, p. 140.

2. They were *Japji*, *Jap Sahib*, *Anand*, *Swayyas* and *Chaupai*.

sweetness.”¹

Nectar
adminis-
tered

With the nectar thus prepared and called *Khande ka Pahul*, the Guru stood up and asked the ‘Five’ to kneel on their left knees. Gazing into their eyes, the Guru showered the nectar in the eyes of each, one by one, and asked each by his turn, to speak aloud : ‘*Wah-i-Guru Ji ka Khalsa, Sri Wah-i-Guru Ji ki Fateh*’—or God’s is the Khalsa, and God’s is the victory. Then the nectar or *Amrit*, was sprinkled in each one’s hair, and then each was asked to take deep draughts of the *Amrit* from the same cup turn by turn. This, thus, transforming them into lions, knit them together in brotherly love, destroying the distinctions of caste and creed. After this then, the Guru gave each the appellation of Singh, or a lion.

Knit
together

Singh, a
lion

Guru
initiated

The more remarkable part of the ceremony came, when after initiating the Five, the Guru himself knelt before them in supplication with folded hands, and prayed them now to initiate him into the new faith. Exactly similar practice was followed in his case, and Guru Gobind Rai, taking the appellation of Singh, now became Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru now exclaimed, writes Gordon : “The Khalsa arose from the Guru and the Guru from the Khalsa. They are mutually protectors of each other.”² And this gave the Sikhs a perfect principle of democracy, the Guru declaring, wherever any five of his Sikhs will be, there will he be present. The five Sikhs together, will have an authority superior to that of his own.

Democracy

The
instructions

The Guru now gave his instructions to the Sikhs. Ghulam Mahai-ul-Din, a Persian historian, gives the text of the report sent by an official news-writer present there, to Aurangzeb. The Guru said : “Let all embrace one creed and obliterate differences of religion. Let the four Hindu castes who have different rules for their guidance abandon them all, adopt the one form of adoration, and become brothers. Let

1. Kartar Singh, p. 144.

2. The Sikhs, p. 39.

no one deem himself superior to another. Let none pay heed to the Ganges, and other places of pilgrimage which are spoken of with reverence in the Shastras, or adore incarnations such as Ram, Krishan, Brahma, and Durga, but believe in Guru Nanak and the other Sikh Gurus. Let men of four castes receive my baptism, eat out of one dish, and feel no disgust or contempt for one another."¹

Then the other instructions followed. The Sikhs were to wear five Ks. i.e. *Kachha*, *Kara*, *Kirpan*, *Kanga*, and *Kes*; or the short breeches, an iron bracelet, a sword, a comb and hair. The *Kachha*, according to some writers, was to represent modesty and character, *Kara*, would act as a weapon of defence, and worn on the right wrist, it would remind one of the Guru, whenever doing something by the right hand. *Kirpan* was a symbol of strength, and self-respect, to be used for the defence of one's faith. *Kanga* was a symbol of cleanliness, and *Kes* a symbol of submission to God in remaining as God created; besides, it was to be a mark of distinction for the Sikhs.

Significance
of Ks.

The Sikhs now became Singhs, and *Khalsa*, or 'Pure', and they were to be the sons of Guru Gobind Singh and their mother would be Sahib Kaur. The Sikhs were not to show any disrespect towards their hair, nor cut them or shave them. They would not use intoxicants; would not eat *halal*, or animal killed after the Muslim fashion; they would chant five *Banis* as chanted at the time of initiation every morning; they would not share bed with any woman except their duly married wife—and whenever they fell from any of the rules thus prescribed, they were to admit of it and ask for forgiveness before the *Sangat*. They were to live a truthful life, give one-tenth of their income in charity, and were to worship one God, as:

The Pure

Other in-
structions

ਜਾਗਤ ਜੋਤ ਜਪੈ ਨਿਸ ਬਾਸਰ, ਦੇਕ ਬਿਨਾ ਮਨ ਨੈਕ ਨਾ ਆਨੈ ।

ਪੂਰਨ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਸਜੈ, ਬ੍ਰਤ ਗੋਰ ਮੜੀ ਮਟ ਭੁਲ ਨਾ ਮਾਨੈ ।

1. Translation by Macauliffe, v, pp. 93-94.

ਤੀਰਥ ਦਾਨ ਦਯਾ ਤਪ ਸੰਯਮ, ਏਕਵਿਨਾ ਨਹਿਦੇਕ ਪਛਾਨੇ ।

ਪੁਰਨ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗੈ ਘਟ ਮੈ, ਤਬ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਤਾਹਿ ਨਖਾਲਸ ਜਾਨੇ ॥

No
infanticide
and sati

"Female infanticide, a custom prevalent then and for many years after in the Punjab, was strictly forbidden, as was also the practice of *Sati*; and rules and regulations were enjoined relating to daily worship, marriage, the law of inheritance, and other matters in which the Sikhs had hitherto conformed to Hindu law."¹

Taken
away

Thus "Gobind took away from his followers each ancient solace of superstition."²

20,000
initiated

The newswriter who wrote to the Emperor, further submitted: "When the Guru had thus addressed the crowd, several Brahmans and Khatri stood up, and said that they accepted the religion of Guru Nanak and of the other Gurus. Others, on the contrary, said that they would never accept any religion which was opposed to the teaching of the Veds and the Shastars, and that they would not renounce at the bidding of a boy the ancient faith which had descended to them from their ancestors. Thus, though several refused to accept the God's religion, about twenty thousand men stood up and promised to obey him, as they had the fullest faith in his divine mission."³

The Significance

Stirred up

Commenting on this, thus writes Gordon: "All was designed to give the Sikhs a distinct national character in opposition to the ways of other people, and to keep alive a sense of duty and profession of faith." And further he adds: "The dry bones of an oppressed peasantry were stirred into life, and the institution of the Sikh baptismal rite at the hands of a few disciples anywhere—in a place of worship, in the house, or by the roadside—brought about the more full and widespread development of the new faith."⁴ Payne also

1. Payne, p. 35.
2. Cunningham, History of the Sikhs.
3. Macauliffe, v, p. 94.
4. Gordon, The Sikhs, pp. 41, 51.

writes: "One of the most important results of Govind Singh's activity was the large increase in the number of his followers."¹

Number
increased

Sunder Singh writes: The Guru "wanted to create a mass awakening and to show to the people that they were strong enough to check the tide of political tyranny and religious persecution; and later events only show that he admirably succeeded in the mission that he had undertaken."²

Mass-
awakening

Under the new system, militarism was adopted as an article of faith. Sword became with the Sikhs an object of worship, as the Guru says:

Militarism-
as faith

"All-steel, I am Thy slave.

Deeming me Thine own, preserve me;

Think of mine honour, whose arm Thou hast taken.

Deeming me Thine own, cherish me,

Single out and destroy mine enemies.

*May both my kitchen and my sword prevail in the world."*³

And the best mode of death was the death while fighting in the battle-field. As the Guru said:

Best death

*"Grant, O God..... when the period of life may draw to its close, on the field of battle, may I die like a hero."*⁴

"The psychological effect of the new manner of naming the Sikhs is quite evident. A person belonging to the lowest caste took *Amrit* and became a Singh. He felt that he was as good and high as the famous Rajputs whose valiant deeds he had heard very often. He shook off all fear and cowardice. He was a 'lion', for that is the literal meaning of the word 'Singh'.⁵

New
manner of
naming

"What Guru Gobind Singh did was this. Now that he had successfully fought a few battles with the hill chiefs

1. Payne, p. 35.

2. Sunder Singh, p. 28.

3. Macauliffe, v, p. 311.

4. Gordon, pp. 41-42.

5. Prof. Kartar Singh, p. 151.

Organi-
sation
and
levelling up

and the Imperial Subedars and found out that even among the so-called rabble of the population, amongst castes that were ever oppressed viz., barbers, washermen, jats and chamars (sweepers) there was the material with which he could oppose the very highest in the social ranks. The only thing required was to give them a proper organisation and *instil* into their minds the beliefs that the lowest among them were equal to the highest."¹ And all this was done.

Nation-
alism as
religion

Guru Gobind Singh realised that the people had religion, but no national feeling. "The only way to make a nation of them was to make nationalism their religion."² The Guru did make nationalism as religion with his Sikhs, and realising that unity was an essential constituent of nationalism, and that the greatest barrier against unity was the existing institution of caste, he struck at the very root of this evil by taking men of all castes into his faith and by making them to drink from the same vessel.

Caste
uprooted

The Guru is reported to have said, "The four tribes of the Hindus, the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishva, and Sudra would, like *pan* (beetle leaf), *Chuna* (lime), *Supari* (beetle-nut) and *Katha* (*terra aponiea* or *catechu*), become all of one colour, when well chewed"³

Distinction
destroyed

Scavengers
disting-
uished

Rajputs and Kshatriyas, had so far been the only class which followed the profession of fighting. This distinction had been one of the causes of the slavery of the Hindus, because whenever an invader came, only a small portion of this community went to the battle-field to check the invader, the rest simply stood by to accept the destiny as it came. The Guru destroyed this distinction, when the men of the lowest castes were among the first to be accepted in his order. It was a magic touch that the most despised caste of scavengers, who now became *Mazhabi* Sikhs, proved to be one of the best fighters after initiation.

1. Sunder Singh, pp. 24-25.

2. Narang, Transformation of Sikhism.

3. Sir John Malcolm, Sketch of the Sikhs, p. 45.

The bravest of the Guru's generals is said to have been Jiwan Singh, a *Mazhabi* Sikh, who fell fighting at Chamkaur and whose tomb still perhaps exists at that place.

Maciver writes that economics, politics, and socialism etc. are all parts of one body, and effect mutually. The service of Guru Gobind Singh was that he united politics with religion and thus purified politics. But while doing this, he himself did not develop any political ambition, as towards the close of his life, he wrote to Aurangzeb: "*Thou art proud of thy empire, while I am proud of the empire of the immortal world.*" Nor is it correct, as Sirkar writes that the Guru: "converted the spiritual unity of the Sikhs into a means of worldly success; he dwarfed the unity of a religious sect into an instrument of political advancement."¹ Despite all his successes, the Guru did not acquire even an inch of land for himself. The Sikhs were simply called upon to fight tyranny, and to protect their faith. Destruction of tyrants was, however, bound to bring dominion and political power to the Sikhs, which though the Guru himself avoided, to it the Sikhs after his death did succumb. But then this was a by-product, and if this could not be avoided, it in no way commanded that the destruction of tyrants was to be postponed or given up.

Politics
purified

Sirkar's
view

The
argument

Nor it is correct to say that by his practices, the Guru fell from some high principles of religion laid down by Guru Nanak, or any of his predecessors. As Dr. Narang writes: "Gobind himself, in fact, as well as his work, was the natural product of the process of evolution that had been going on ever since the foundation of Sikhism. The harvest which ripened in the time of Guru Gobind Singh had been sown by Guru Nanak and watered by his successors. The sword which carved the Khalsa's way to glory was undoubtedly forged by Gobind, but the steel had been provided by Nanak."² Guru Nanak had condemned Babur and his activities, and Guru Gobind Singh challenged Babur's successors and their activities. And just as Guru Nanak's condemnation in the most nak-

Did not fall

A logical
process

1. See Sirkar, II op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 301-302.

2. Transformation of Sikhism, p. i.

God and
war

ed terms, of Lodhis and Babur, did not entail, upon him a diversion from religion as a base and as an ultimate end; Guru Gobind's challenging of the tyrants with a naked sword did not lessen his faith in Almighty and sharpen his interest in things material. *The best man is he, Guru Gobind Singh wrote, who utters God's name from his lips, even while he thinks of war in his heart:*

ਧਨ ਜੀਓ ਤਿਹ ਕੋ ਜਗ ਮੇ,
ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਹਰਿ, ਚਿਤ ਮੈ ਜੁਪ ਬਿਚਾਰੈ”

Nanak
echoed

And in his following words, we find a clear echo of Guru Nanak's beliefs:

*“God is in the water, God is in the dry land,
God is in the heart, God is in the forest,
God is in the mountain, God is in the cave,
God is in the earth, God is in heaven,
God is here, God is there.”*¹

Summed
up

Prem Sumarg sums up the Guru's ideology very clearly: The Khalsa should be ever armed. He should be a lion at heart with the meek appearance of a cow. When he finds that evil does persist in mischief and the king does not dispense justice, and religion is in danger, then seeing his opportunity, he should take up arms. After all, this is the last resort.”

Last resort

1. Macauliffe, v, p. 269.

CHAPTER XVIII

AFTER THE KHALSA WAS CREATED

The creation of the Khalsa came to the Hill chiefs as a bolt from the blue. The growing military strength of the Guru, and the increasing number of his followers, necessitated a great increase in the amount of essential supplies, and since Bhim Chand gave the Guru no co-operation, and the adjoining villages often refused supplies to the Sikhs, the Sikhs were compelled to get the supply by force, and sometimes to plundur the villages which opposed them. The Hill chief considered the Guru as an intruder, and a menace to his power and position. Balia and Alam Chand had already been defeated by the Guru, and there seemed to him to be no prospect of peace until the Guru was either expelled from his territory, or destroyed. Bhim Chand of Kehlur, Bir Singh of Jaswal and Madan Pal of Sirmur, met in a conference, and sent an envoy to the Emperor's viceroy at Delhi, and requested for help against the Guru. Their request was forwarded to the Emperor in Deccan, who replied that Imperial army could be sent to their help, if they were prepared to meet its expenses. The rajas willingly agreed to do so, and the two Imperial *Panjhazari Sardars*, Painde Khan and Dina Beg were sent with their troops, who joined by the three rajas, marched on Anandpur.

On the other side, the Guru also had made his preparations. The two opposing armies met, drums beat, bugles blew and the soldiers thundered, Painde Khan is said to have challenged the Guru in a duel, but was killed. The Hill chiefs took to their heels, Dina Beg, who continued fighting for some time, was wounded, but finally fled the field and was pursued by the Sikhs upto Khidrabad. And thus

First battle
of
Anandpur

Causes

Mughal
help
secured

Guru
prepared

Victorious

ended the first battle of Anandpur, yielding a complete victory to the Guru and his Sikhs.

Second
Battle of
Anandpur

Though defeated, Bhim Chand was not prepared to rest at peace, while the Guru's influence and power increased. Determined to make one more trial, the Hill chiefs met in a council once again. The proposal to send another request for help to the Emperor was countered by Handuria, at whose suggestion it was decided to invite all the Hill chiefs to make a combined attack upon the Guru. Almost all the Hill chiefs, thus, were invited, and this included those of Mandi, Kulu, Kainthal, Nurpur, Kotoch, Jammu, Chander, Busher, Dadhwal and Srinagar (Garwal). Besides, *Gujjars* and *Ranghars*, who had a long-standing enmity with the Sikhs, were also invited to join. A letter was dispatched to the Guru, inviting him either to vacate Anandpur, or pay rent; failing which, he was threatened destruction at the hands of a formidable combination of the Hill chiefs. The Guru, however, refused any of the two alternatives, saying that the land where the town of Anandpur developed, had been purchased by his father, and hence there was no question of paying any rent. He accepted the alternative of another trial in the battle-field.

All Hill
Chiefs
together

Guru
accepted
challenge

Chiefs
marched

Receiving this reply, the Hill chiefs were enraged and they marched their combined forces on Anandpur. As they approached the city, the eldest son of the Guru, Prince Ajit Singh, fell upon *Gujjars* and *Ranghars*, with his four thousand Sikhs; while Daya Singh, Alim Singh and Udhe Singh, taking with them the Sikhs of Majha, directed their attacks against the hill armies. "Such was the dash and vigour displayed by them that the hill armies, though far superior in numbers and equipment, were reduced to a sore plight and, towards the close of the day were forced to retreat."¹ Thus ended the first day's fight yielding complete victory to the Sikhs. The story was repeated on the next day, and the Hill chiefs now decided the blockade of the town to be the safest alternative.

Failed in
action

1. Prof. Kartar Singh, p. 179.

The town was now closely invested, and the siege continued for full twenty days, thus says Gur Bilas; but without any visible success. At last, at the suggestion of Kesri Chand, a drunken elephant, with a spear projecting from his forehead, and body covered with steel, followed by Hill chiefs and their armies, was directed to gate-crash through the fort. The Guru appointed Bachitar Singh, one of his personal bodyguards, to meet the elephant. This Sikh proceeded with such a vehemence on a horse that when he struck his spear on the elephant's forehead, it pierced deep. With a loud cry, the elephant turned back and trod underfoot many of its own men, thus causing a complete confusion among them. The Sikhs fell upon this confused mass of their opponents, and did several noted chiefs to death. But finding themselves greatly outnumbered, they later retired into the fort.

Besieged

Elephant sent

But failed *

As the night fell, the Hill chiefs met together and reviewed the situation. Ultimately, resolving to play a trick on the Guru, they wrote a letter to him, acknowledging the Guru's unconquerable might, but requesting him to leave Anandpur at least for one day, to save them from the shame and humiliation which would be involved in their retreat in that condition. They also swore by the cow that they would not put the Guru to any harm. Determined to demonstrate the faithlessness of the Hill chiefs, as some records say, the Guru, entrusting the protection of the fort in the hands of a brave body of Sikhs, selected a band of warriors and retired to Nirmoh, at a distance of about two miles from Anandpur. Mixing the first battle of Anandpur and the Guru's clash with Alim Chand and Balia Chand, Dr. Bannerji seems to have confused himself at the way the second battle of Anandpur ended.¹ But the account is clear, and calls for the least of argumentation.

Trick on the Guru

No confusion

At Nirmoh, the Guru stationed himself on an eminence. In the meanwhile, the Hill chiefs having thrown their vows to the wind, fell upon the small number of the Sikhs as accompanied the Guru. Here again, however, they were

Battle of Nirmoh

1. Dr. Bannerji, ii, p. 128.

Chiefs
defeated

beaten back. The Hill chiefs, however, continued their efforts against the Guru. They made one more appeal to Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sarhind. After hearing of the defeat of the Imperial army in the first battle of Anandpur, Aurangzeb himself is said to have sent an order to Wazir Khan by this time, to proceed against the Guru.

Mughul
help

Guru
attacked

Wazir Khan thus proceeded with a large number of troops to the assistance of the Hill chiefs. The Guru had already been apprised of this development. Several Sikhs who had come at Nirmoh to have the Guru's darshan, were detained by him to fight the enemy. The enemy marched, and the Mughals attacked the Guru from one side, while the Hill chiefs attacked him from the other. The fight continued fiercely for the whole day, and as the night fell, the enemy forces were compelled to retire. The next morning, the attack was continued, and the Guru finding himself badly outnumbered, decided to retire from the place. An invitation had already been received from the raja of Basali, and the Guru proceeded thither. The enemy, however, pursued him, and the Guru decided to give them another battle, in which the combined forces of the Mughals and the Hill chiefs were decisively rolled back. In this battle, however, the Guru lost Sahib Chand, a hero of the battle of Bhangani, on whose body, a fierce action was fought, which resulted in the victory of the Sikhs.

Enemy
rolled back

Battle of
Basali

With Bhim
Chand

The Guru crossed the Sutlej safely, with all his baggage, and proceeded towards Basali with his Sikhs. The Hill chiefs overjoyed at their so called success in forcing the Guru to leave the place, made suitable presents to Wazir Khan, and went home. But soon, the Raja of Kehlur is said to have led another attack against the Guru at Basali, which, however, the Guru did not have much difficulty in beating back. After this battle, which is known as the battle of Basali, the Guru stayed for some time at Basali and then at Bhabaur, and then returned to Anandpur, from where he had already received repeated calls to come back.

The Guru was offered no resistance on his return. The

raja of Kehlur was completely demoralised by this time, and he with some other Hill chiefs, approached the Guru once again for peace and friendship. The Guru, who was only too anxious to live and let live in peace, accepted the offer ; and thus for some time, the hostilities were called off. But the Guru having no faith in the Hill rajas, continued his preparations ; and greater number of Sikhs began to visit him and offer to be enrolled in the army

Raja demoralised

Friendship

No faith

The peace between the Guru and the Hill chiefs could not continue for a long time. Once, it is said, as the Guru lay encamped near Chamkaur, two Imperial officers, going from Lahore to Delhi, were requested by the Raja of Kehlur to attack the Guru, promising to pay them large sums of money. Though a small contingent, the Sikhs gave a resolute fight to the Imperial army, but just when the fight was at its thickest, an amazing thing happened. Saiyad Beg, one of the Imperial officers, had already heard of the name and the fame of the Guru, and when he saw him in the battle-field, he was so much impressed by his saintly looks that he, persuading as many of his soldiers as he could, joined the Guru. When Alif Khan, the other officer, saw it, he left the field and beat a hasty retreat. Considering Gur Bilas, as the most reliable authority on this subject¹, which does not mention this incident, Dr. Bannerji has omitted this account from the main body of his book as being of dubious nature.² Gur Sobha also does not mention this, but an account of it is available in Sau Sakhi and Suraj Prakash. The incident may perhaps have been too small to attract the attention of all, but all the same, it does seem to have occurred, as we hear Saiyad Beg to have stayed on with the Guru, and later his mention is made, as having fought for the Guru, in some battles which followed.

First Battle of Chamkaur

Saiyad Beg joined Guru

Possibly correct

After the above mentioned incident, Sau Sakhi³ and Suraj Prakash write, that being convinced of the treacherous

Third battle of Anandpur

1. Bannerji, ii, p. 128 (Foot Note)

2. See Ibid, p. 134 (Foot Note)

3. See Sakhis, 20, 21, 27.

designs of the Kehlur chief, the Sikhs began to raid his territory. Numerous complaints came against the Sikh exploits, and the Kehlur chief now decided once again to give a call to the Hill rajas, to come to his aid against the Guru. Some of them responded to his call and joined him in an attack on the Sikhs. This time, again, however, the old story was repeated, and the Hill chiefs had to take to their heels.

Cause

Raja
defeatedFourth
Battle of
Anandpur

Saida Khan

Anandpur
vacatedEnemy
plunderedWere these
battles
fought ?

As the news of the repeated failures of the Hill chiefs and the Mughal Officers reached Aurangzeb in the Deccan, he sent a large army under Saida Khan¹ to bring the Guru to submission. It was the harvest time when Saida Khan marched on Anandpur, and the Guru had dispersed all his Sikhs, except about five hundred. This small number of the Sikhs gave a determined fight to the Mughal army, but as they could not stand a large army for a long time, the Guru ordered the evacuation of Anandpur. As the Sikhs left the town, the Mughals entered it and plundered it badly, after which, they proceeded towards Sirhind in an hilarious mood. The Sikhs, however, taking the Guru's permission, attacked them from the rear ; putting a large number of them to sword in the confusion that followed. The Sikhs were thus successful in recovering the booty which the enemy had captured from Anandpur.

Some writers omit the three actions given above altogether, and proceed directly to say that ; after about two year's peace during which the Guru's Sikhs having full control on some of the adjoining villages which had been ceded to the Guru by the Kehlur chief, as a result of an agreement; and which solved their problem of supply almost completely; some misunderstanding developed again resulting in a clash. But in our opinion, though the writers may differ as to their details, it should be erroneous to assert that all these are pious fabrications of the later age. Without detaining ourselves here for long, however, we shall proceed to the next event regarding which we are more or less on firm footing,

1. Different from Saiyad Beg referred to above.

and which, if the above three incidents are correct, may be called the fifth battle of Anandpur.

Fifth battle
of
Anandpur

The Emperor was now alarmed yet further. According to Suraj Prakash, Bhim Chand of Kehlur himself went to the Emperor to inform him of the situation¹. And the Emperor sent express orders to Wazir Khan of Sarhind and Zabardast Khan of Lahore, to proceed with a large army against the Guru. The chiefs of Kehlur, Kangra, Jaswal, Mandi, Kulu, Nalagarh, Kaithal, Nurpur, Chamba, Jammu, Busaher, Dhadwal, Darauli, Bijarwal and Srinagar (Garhwal) joined their forces, and this formidable army marched against the Guru to have another trial with him.

Rajas and
Mughals
joined

The Guru also had made his preparations and a large number of the Sikhs had joined him from Majha and the Malwa. As the flood of the enemy soldiers appeared before Anandpur, cannons were drawn in order, and the Guru ordered them to be discharged. Musketeers took fatal aims at the opposing artillery men. Fierce battle raged throughout the day, and by the time night fell, nine hundred of the enemy lay dead ; having killed a far less number of the Sikhs.

Many lay
dead

The next day the enemy deciding to batter the walls of the fort, aimed their guns from a distance. But failing to make any strong impression, the allied cavalry proceeded to fight at a close quarter, but was rolled back by a fearful discharge of the Sikh guns and arrows. The story was repeated on the third day, and thereafter the allies decided upon the siege of the town as the only possible alternative to annihilate the Guru.

Guns failed

Closer
action
failed

The town of Anandpur was now surrounded from all sides, and all the ingress and egress was stopped. The Sikhs took a defensive position and the days now began slowly to crawl by. On one occasion, seeing the enemy come close to the town, away from their defences, Nahar Singh and Sher Singh suddenly fell upon them in the night, thus

Besieged

1. Suraj Prakash, p. 5737.

causing them a grievous loss. As their supplies failed, the Sikhs occasionally led desultory sallies to seize the supplies from the enemy ; on one single occasion seizing of it as much as to last for several days. But the enemy understanding their tactics tightened their hold, and the life inside the fort became utterly difficult, as Senapat writes.¹ The stores being exhausted, bark of trees began to be ground down and bread prepared of it. Trees were cleared of their leaves, and the Sikhs, ate anything they could lay their hands upon. Just this time, the Guru received an envoy from the Hill chiefs, promising safe conduct for him and the Sikhs if they vacated Anandpur peacefully. The Guru's mother and some Sikhs approached the Guru to accept the offer, but to demonstrate the futility of putting reliance upon the enemy's promises, the Guru sent out some bullocks loaded with rags and stones covered with golden clothes, giving out that it was the Guru's treasure, and the Sikhs and he himself were to follow it. As, however, the bullocks passed through the enemy lines, they were looted but only to their disappointment. The Sikhs thus continued to hold inside for seven months, and now came an autograph letter from Aurangzeb that "*I have sworn on Quran not to harm thee,*"² and that the Guru should vacate Anandpur and come either to the Emperor or go anywhere he liked. Some writers doubt the statement that the Emperor should have written any such letter to the Guru at all. But the Guru's own words in the letter he later addressed to the Emperor, make the thing explicitly clear. He says : "*I have no faith in thine oath to which thou tookest the one God as witness. I have not a particle of confidence in thee..... He who putteth faith in thine oath on the Quran is thereby a ruined man.*"³ It is thus clear that Aurangzeb must have written a letter to the Guru to the above stated effect.

When the Emperor's letter reached the Guru, he still

1. See Gur Sobha, p. 59.

2. Prof. Kartar Singh, p. 209.

3. Translation by Macauliffe, v, p. 202.

refused to place any reliance upon the enemy's promises ; but some Sikhs, who were now utterly tired of the life of hardship, approached the Guru's mother again ; who in turn approached the Guru to leave the fort ; but to no avail. Consequently, the things are said to have come to such a pass, that a large number of the Sikhs wrote out a deed of renunciation, saying 'Neither you are our Guru, nor are we your Sikhs.' They handed it over to the Guru and left the fort. Some of these Sikhs repented afterwards, and came unexpectedly to the Guru's assistance at the battle of Khidrana. Here at Anandpur, however, ultimately the Guru himself seem to have been prevailed upon, though it is not clear how, and he left the fort together with his four sons, mother, wives, and Sikhs ; definite number of whom cannot be ascertained.

Pressure of
Sikhs

Renunci-
tion

Guru left

The oath taken by Hindus on cow and the Muslims on Quran was, however, wantonly violated, as the Guru refers to in his *Zafarnama*—the letter later written to the Emperor, as quoted above. It is said, as the Guru reached the flooded Sarsa, the enemy fell upon him. A complete confusion was caused, the Guru's mother with his two youngest sons going on one side, his wives Mata Sundri and Mata Sahib Kaur going on the other side and ultimately reaching Delhi, and the Guru himself with his two eldest sons and with only forty Sikhs going to yet another side and finally reaching Chamkaur.

Attacked
near Sarsa

Confusion

The Guru's mother, Gujri, with his two youngest sons, Jujhar Singh, aged 9, and Fateh Singh, aged 7, being separated from the Guru, took refuge at Kheri, near Sarhind, with a Brahmin, an old discharged cook of the Guru. With the hope of getting some reward, the Brahmin, however, later deceived them, and all the three were handed over to Wazir Khan, the governor of Sarhind, who out of anger at the way the small princes fearlessly behaved, and at the instigation of one Suchanand Khatri who had some enmity with the Guru, got them mercilessly bricked alive; despite the advice of the Nawab of Maler Kotla to the contrary. The Guru's mother

Youngest
sons

Executed

died of grief at this sad end of her grandchildren.

The Guru with his forty Sikhs and two eldest sons, pursued by the enemy, now reached Chamkaur, where occupying a mudbuilt house on an eminence, he prepared to give a battle.¹ Here then occurred an event which showed what heroic endurance and undaunted courage the Guru and his Sikhs possessed; and before which even the heroism of the Spartan of the Pass of Thermopylae would faint into insignificance. The Guru here had only forty Sikhs, as it is clear from the Zafarnama, where in he writes: "what could forty men do when a hundred thousand came on them unawares."²

On the other hand, the enemy, as the Guru says, were a hundred thousand. Even if we do not accept the literal meaning of these words as one lakh, there is no doubt that the number of the enemy soldiers was overwhelmingly large.³ Latif writes: "The Guru himself behaved with great bravery, killing with his own hand Nahar Khan, the commander of the imperial troops, and wounding the other, Khwaja Mohamed. It was, however, a combat of a handful of men against overwhelming numbers. The devoted little band fought to the last, but the Guru, taking advantage of a dark night, and accompanied by five of his disciples, threaded his way to the outskirts of the camp in disguise."⁴

Here, in this battle, the two eldest of the Guru's sons were killed, and it is said that the Guru himself was determined not to leave, when five Sikhs, the *Panj Piyaras*, ordered him to effect his escape. The Guru had to bow

1. The house belonged to a Jat, which according to Gur Sobha, was willingly offered, but which according to Suraj Prakash and Gur Bilas, was occupied forcibly, putting the owner under arrest.
2. Macauliffe, v, p. 202.
3. Author of 'Ahkam-i-Alamgiri Rampuri', pp. 255 B-256 A, a contemporary writer says, the cavalry, besides the artillery, numbered only 700; but this at the sight of other accounts, Sikh as well as non-Sikh, seems too much of an under estimation. See Latif, History of the Punjab, p. 265.
4. Latif, p. 265.

Second
Battle of
Chamkaur

Forty and
a lakh

Guru
escaped

Guru
ordered
to leave

before the order, as he himself had promised at the time of the creation of the Khalsa that the authority of the Five-Beloved would be higher than even that of the Guru. A Sikh, named Sant Singh, put himself into the Guru's dress, and he along with another Sikh Sangat Singh, remained behind, to be captured by the enemy, the next day, and be beheaded believing him to be the Guru.

Sant
beheaded

According to the Sikh accounts, the Guru escaped only with three Sikhs, and they too were separated from him, as he threaded his way out. The Guru reached the Machhiwara forest, where out of fatigue, he fell asleep, and in the meanwhile, he was discovered by the three Sikhs. Soon after the Guru met two Muslims, Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan, who had some time, sold some horses to him, and who held him in very high respect. They disguised the Guru as a *Pir*, and together with the two Sikhs, Man Singh and Dharm Singh in disguise, they lifted him in a litter, while the third Sikh, Daya Singh waved the '*Chauri*' from behind. As they moved, they were actually intercepted by a contingent of the Muslim army, but they escaped saying it was a high '*Pir* of Uchch,'¹ whom they were carrying.

Uchch Ka
Pir

The Guru thus reached Berar, and stayed for sometime at Dina, near Kangar. It was here that the Guru wrote out his *Zafarnama*, the letter to the Emperor, in which he called Aurangzeb a "*crafty and deceitful fox*" and said: "were the Prophet himself present here, I would make it my special object to inform him of thy treachery. Do what is incumbent on thee, and adhere to thy '*written promise*'".² The letter was written perhaps to ask the Emperor to meet out proper punishment to those who mis-behaved with him. And it was sent to him through Bhai Daya Singh.

At Dina
Zafarnama
composed

In the meanwhile, the Sikhs began to flock to the Guru here, once again, and soon the Guru had a good number of

Battle of
Khidrana

1. Uchch is a town in the south-western Punjab, and priests of this town were held by the Muslims in high respect and awe.
2. Macauliffe, pp. 202-206.

Forty Sikhs
meet

No water

Enemy
retired

Mended

Forty
Muktas

soldiers under his command. Wazir Khan hearing of it, sent a large army against him. The Guru left Dina in search of a strategic Spot. The Chaudri of Kot Kapura having refused him the use of his fort, the Guru proceeded to Khidrana and waited for the approaching enemy. In the meanwhile, the forty of the Sikhs who had renounced the Guru at Anandpur, feeling repentant, were proceeding to ask for the Guru's forgiveness, when near Khidrana, on seeing the Muslim army, they decided to wash the blot and prepared to give them a battle. It was a well contested combat, the Guru¹ also discharging his arrows from a distance. It was a desert country where the battle was fought, and the only pool of water was where the Guru himself encamped. Hard pressed for want of water, after many of their number had been killed, the enemy retired yielding victory to the Guru. After that the Guru came to the battle field, where leader of the forty, Mahan Singh, still had some life in him. The Guru moved with utter love, wiped his face with his handkerchief and asked him his last desire. On being requested, the Guru sent for the deed of renunciation these Sikhs had signed, and tore it away. These forty Sikhs are known in the Sikh history as the *Forty Muktas*, or the 'Forty Saved Ones'; and the place where the battle was fought, is now known as Muktsar.

Relations with the Emperors.

Guru and
Aurangzeb

Two
theories

The relations of Guru Gobind Singh with the Mughals have been a subject of controversy. Irvine writes that "the Muhammadan authors assert that Guru Govind now sent in petitions to Almgir, offering to make his submission, coupled with a promise to accept Islam"² And Latif says, the Emperor "issued a mandate summoning the Guru to his presense. When the messenger reached Gobind and delivered the royal *firman* to him, he kissed it and placed it on his head in token of respect.....he regarded himself as a dependent

1. Gur Sobha says the Sikhs with the Guru also participated in the battle.
2. Later Mughals, p. 141.

and vassal of the "King of Kings", and that to obey his majesty's command would be an honour to him, but that, before accompanying the messenger, he would like to submit his grievances to the emperor in writing." And the Guru now composed the *Zafarnama*.¹

The two views quoted above clearly show that the Mohammedan writers' accounts are not free from bias. It would be simply preposterous to assume that the Guru prepared himself to accept the Emperor's faith whom he condemned in the *Zafarnama* saying: "I do not deem thou knowest God, since thou hast done acts of oppression. Wherefore the great God knoweth thee not, and will not receive thee with all thy wealth."² Nor should he have kissed any of the king's firman and placed it on his head, when he addressed him as "*crafty and deceitful as a fox*."³

Still, however, there is no doubt in the fact that the Guru did try to contact the Emperor through his letter, his purpose, as is obvious, being to get punished those responsible for misdoings in the Punjab. Moreover, the fact that after the battle of Khidrana, no effort was made to harass him in any manner, and that the Guru could rest after this for some time at Damdama making disciples and carrying on his intellectual activities, shows that by this time some sort of understanding must have been reached between him and the authorities. The views of *Gur Sobha* may here, therefore, be safely accepted that when the Guru's letter reached the Emperor, he repented upon his actions and issued the orders that the Guru might not be harassed in any manner, and should be permitted to go wherever he liked.⁴

Further, the Guru writes in the *Zafarnama*: "I will not enter thy presence, nor travel on the same road with thee, but if God so will it, I will proceed towards thee." And this shows that although the Guru wanted no interview with the

Simply
prepos-
terous

His letter

And
reaction

Closer
quarter

1. Latif, p. 267.

2. *Zafarnama*, Translation by Macauliffe, v, p. 205.

3. Ibid, p. 203.

4. *Gur Sobha*, xiii.

Emperor, he did want to be at a closer quarter with him, wherefrom perhaps to carry his negotiations through the envoys more easily. And after sometime the Guru actually set out towards Deccan, the Emperor, however, having died before he reached there.

Emperor
died

After this, the Guru is said to have sent Bhai Dharm Singh with some Sikhs to help Bahadur Shah in his war of succession in the battle of Jajau, as the latter was already on good terms with him. Soon Bahadur Shah was successful, and invited the Guru to meet him at Agra, where the Guru was received with due honour. At Agra, the Guru stayed in a garden about four miles from the imperial residence and the two met occasionally. Later the Guru also accompanied the Emperor in his campaign towards Rajputana. During all this time, the Guru's purpose seems to have been to get proper punishment for his enemies in the Punjab, and he was also hopeful of getting it as it is clear from his letter to the inhabitants of Dhaul, wherein he writes that "Bahadur Shah had granted him a *Khillat*, of Rs. 60,000 and a *Dhuk-dhuki* (golden chain with a pendant) and that talks were proceeding satisfactorily on other matters under discussion and he might soon return to the Punjab."¹

With
Bahadur
Shah

Helped

At Agra

Campaigns

Purpose

But his hope of getting justice from Bahadur Shah too, as he had desired, seems to have been belied, and finally, instead of coming back to the Punjab, he proceeded towards Deccan, where he met Banda Bairagi, and handed over the mission of punishing the wrong doers in the Punjab to him, as we shall study in a following chapter.

Belied

Banda
commi-
ssioned

Not
employed

Some writers, such as Latif, have tried to show that the Guru did not accompany the Emperor in his campaigns as a mere companion, the Emperor rather "appointed him to the command of five thousand men in the army, thus utilizing the services of an insurrectionary leader to the benefit of

1. Sunder Singh, p. 68 (Foot Note).

the State."¹ It seems, however, difficult to believe that with the sort of character the Guru possessed, he should have accepted any service under the Mughal authorities. Besides, we have a clear evidence of a contemporary writer, Khafi Khan, who despite his unkindly feelings towards the Guru, makes the fact clear that the Guru was a mere companion. He says : "During the days when Bahadur Shah directed his attention towards Haidrabad or when he started towards that place, one of the leaders of that infamous community, Gobind by name came unto the presence of the Emperor, accompanied by two or three hundred *sowars* carrying spears and some infantry, and proceeded in the company of the Emperor."²

A
companion

The Death

Finally the Guru reached Nander, a place on the Godawari river, and here he began to follow regular religious practices and the preaching work. After some time of his stay here, one day the Guru was stabbed by a Pathan. His wound was washed and sewn, but as he tried to raise himself, the threads broke again. The wound was again sewn, but the Guru knew that his end was approaching. When at last he felt that his last moment had arrived, he "opened the Granth Sahib and placing five paisa and a coco-nut before it, solemnly bowed to it as his successor. Then uttering 'Wahguru ji ka Khalsa ! Wahguru ji ki Fateh !' he circumambulated the sacred volume and said, 'O beloved Khalsa, let him who desireth to behold me, behold the Granth. Obey the Granth Sahib. It is the visible body of the Guru. And let him who desireth to meet me diligently search its hymns.'"³ About one and a half hours after midnight, he got up, carried on his usual recitation of the hymns, and then calling aloud his Sikhs, bade them farewell. The Guru departed from this world on Thursday, the 18th of October, 1708.

At Nander

Stabbed by
Pathan

Holy
Granth
successor

Died 1708

Different views have been expressed by different writers

1. Latif, p. 268.

2. Muntkhab-ul-Lubab.

3. Macauliffe, v, p. 244.

Who was
this
Pathan ?

Wazir
Khan's
man

as to who this Pathan was who stabbed the Guru. Without entering into any debate, we might accept the view of Senapat, who was one of the fifty-two poets of the Guru's *Darbar*, and whose account is therefore contemporary and based on better information. His view is supported by *Chatra Jugi*, another valuable document written by Bhagwan Singh. According to this view, as the Guru moved about with Bahadur Shah, Wazir Khan of Sirhind got apprehensive that the Emperor might be moved to award him punishment due to his activities. He therefore deputed a young Pathan to murder the Guru, and the Pathan getting the information regarding the Guru's whereabouts from his wife at Delhi, proceeded to Nander, and taking his opportunity, stabbed him, but was instantaneously killed by the Guru by his sword after he had done his job. The Guru later died of this wound.

Causes of the Guru's Success

During the space of about twenty years ending into the year 1705, the Guru is said to have fought as many as fourteen actions. And in almost all of these actions the Guru was successful, except when he was hopelessly outnumbered by the enemy troops. We might give here a short account of the factors which led to such grand success of the Guru, against such heavy odds.

Personal
qualities

The first and the most important reason of the Guru's success was of course, the personal qualities of head and heart that the Guru possessed. He was a military genius of the highest order. The patience and resolve with which he set out not only to revive amongst his Sikhs a military spirit of Guru Hargobind's time, but even to carry it to the hitherto-unapproached climax, where he declared his one Sikh to be equivalent to one and a quarter lakhs of his enemies ; show us clearly the high inborn qualities that the Guru possessed. As a great General, the Guru had a very keen understanding of the art of military strategy. His selection of a spot at Machhiwara, and another at Muktsar, to give a battle to the overwhelming number of his enemy, are very potent proofs of

Great
General

this. The selection of Anandpur as centre of his activities is in itself an action meriting high military appreciation. Situated at the foot of the hills, Anandpur was fortified from all the other sides, and the Guru built four strong forts in it i. e. the forts of Anandgarh, Lohgarh, Keshgarh and Fatehgarh, to meet the imperial as well as the Hill chief's forces.

Forti-
fication

The Guru, besides, was an adept in the use of arms. As Payne writes, he was "an expert horseman, swordsman, archer, and swimmer, and was a keen follower of the chase."¹ The patience and fortitude with which he put up only forty men at Machhiwara to fight a flood of enemy troops, prove his qualities of leadership. And there is no doubt that such qualities of leadership were a strong factor which brought the Sikhs a success.

Adept in
armsGreat
leader

Another factor was the religious enthusiasm of the Sikhs. They were no mercenaries fighting for some material gains. They fought on the basis of their conviction, and had their heart and soul in the fight. They had a confidence that they were fighting for a right cause, and their success in the battle-field would, get them not only an honour in this world, but also peace and a privileged position in the next. *Suraj Prakash* writes thus: "The Sikhs were delighted at the prospect of the battle and congratulated themselves on their good fortune in being allowed to fight for their Guru and their faith. Several of them put on saffron coloured clothes in token of rejoicing and said 'we have only four days to live in the world. Why should we not obtain the exalted dignity of *martyrdom* which will ensure salvation?' The Sikhs had their heart in the cause for which they had taken up the sword and every one thought it his duty to do his little bit towards that end. They were not mere mercenaries like their opponents."² Payne writes: "There was no higher duty for a Sikh than to die fighting in defence of his faith ;.....Govind promised *mukti*, or exemption from transmigration, to any of his

Sikhs'
religious
enthusiamWelcomed
warPromise of
Mukti

1. Payne, p. 37.

2. Quoted by Macauliffe, v, p. 167

followers who should fall."¹

Guru must
be obeyed

Then, as Gough writes, the Sikhs "believed him to be special favourite of heaven."² Gobind Singh was their Guru, and ideal of absolute surrender to the Guru had been one of the fundamental principles of the Sikh religion. Bhai Gurdas wrote about it, that to be a Sikh was to be dead. A Sikh was a purchased slave to be yoked by the Guru to any work as he desired.³ And therefore once ordered by the Guru to do a particular job, the Sikh had either to do it or die. There were the traditions such as that of Jahandas, who had a wound in his foot, and once asked by the Guru not to envelop it and keep it raised from the ground, he kept his foot raised and the wound remained uncovered for three months, when the Guru met him again and told him that his instruction was intended only as a precaution to keep the wound clean.⁴ Under Guru Gobind Singh, there is only one instance, at Anandpur, where the Sikhs deserted him, but here too, they later on returned, and died fighting for him.

The
tradition

Jats

The Jat element among the Sikhs had a particular part to play. As Payne writes : "The Jats are neither an intellectual nor a cultural race..... But what the Jat lacks in intelligence he makes up for by his courage, his honesty, his thrift, and his unfailing industry."⁵ The *Jats* formed the back-bone of the Guru's army, and their devotion and faithfulness, coupled with their bravery and fortitude, were another strong factor which brought the Sikhs victories.

A back-
bone

Mughal
army

On the other hand, the Mughal army consisted of only mercenaries, having no faith in the cause they were fighting for, especially when they were fighting against the Guru. Nor were they efficiently led and conducted by their leaders. In the Anandpur battles, command of these forces was often given in more than one hand, and the commanders differed

1. Payne, p. 35.
2. Sikh & the Sikh Wars, p. 19.
3. Var iii, 18.
4. Dabistan, ii, pp. 282-283.
5. Payne, p. 37.

with each other as regard to strategy and manner. Twice atleast, the Mughal forces were deserted by their own officers, once by Said Khan and at another time by Saiyal Beg, who went over to the Guru. Moreover, the imperial forces had exhausted much of their energy and strength in their campaigns against Shiva ji and the Marathas in the Deccan. The Mughal empire itself was tottering, there being a lot of mis-management and slackness in the North due to Aurangzeb's continuous absence from there. All these circumstances contributed to their failure.

Their
leaders

Exhausted
in Deccan

Slackness
in North

Nor were the Hill chiefs strong and better placed in this respect. Besides their internal weakness, they were immature politicians who could not even know where their good lay, and crossed several times in favour and against the Guru. Their troops consisted of mercenary soldiers who fought neither out of conviction nor with confidence. They had no efficient leaders to lead them, and the Hill chiefs suffered from mutual jealousies and lack of perfect co-operation. We have the instances such as those of the chiefs of Basali and Mandi, who joined the coalition against the Guru due to their fear of being excluded from brotherhood, and secretly sympathised with him. Under all such circumstances if all the Hill chiefs together failed in their fight against the Guru, there was nothing to be wondered at.

Hill chiefs
weak

Immature

Mercenaries

Jealousies

Secret
sympathies

CHAPTER XIX

GURU GOBIND SINGH

A—Character Estimate

Born with
mission

Born with a great mission, the Guru writes about himself :

*"I shall now tell my own history,
How God brought me into the world as I was performing
penance¹
On the mountain of Hem Kunt,*

*.....
I performed such penance
That I became blended with God.*

*.....
When God gave me the order
I assumed birth in this Kal age.
I did not desire to come,
As my attention was fixed on God's feet.
God remonstrated earnestly with me,
And sent me into this world with the following orders :—
When I created this world
I first made the demons, who became enemies and
oppressors.*

His mission

*They became intoxicated with the strength of their arms,
And ceased to worship Me, the Supreme Being.
I became angry and at once destroyed them.
In their place I established the gods :
They also busied themselves with receiving sacrifices and
worship,
And called themselves supreme beings.*

*.....
I have cherished thee as My son*

*And created thee to extend My religion.
Go and spread My religion there,
And restrain the world from senseless acts'.*

.....
*Understand this, ye holy men, in your souls.
I assumed birth for the purpose
Of spreading the faith, saving the saints,
And extirpating all tyrants."*¹

Commenting on this, Dr. Narang writes : "He seems to have been deeply impressed by the idea which runs throughout the Puranic literature, *Viz.*, the idea of the saviour appearing from time to time to uphold righteousness and destroy un-righteousness, to uproot evil and establish good, to destroy the oppressor and rescue the weak and innocent."² And on this Dr. Bannerji remarks : "The sad plight in which he found his followers as well as the Hindus in general, religious strifes brought about by the persecuting policy of Aurangzeb, the prevailing corruption, ignorance and superstition, and his own personal resentment at his father's execution must have generated in his mind an earnest conviction that this was undoubtedly the time for the rise of a saviour, and his strong impulses and the force of circumstances in which he was placed soon led him to work himself up into a belief that he himself was the man the times need."³

The two
views

The point brought out is that while Dr. Narang and Dr. Bannerji may or may not accept the Puranic idea that God sends a saviour to uphold righteousness, the Guru's claim to be one such saviour seems to them to be definitely contrary to their order of reason. It is indeed a height of tragedy that the best brains of this age had their intellectual flights limited within the material plane, of which every nook and corner they could explore ; but the moment they saw a vision of the spiritual plane, they either closed their eyes at it and became perfectly blind, or if they did see something, they tampered

Point
made

1. Macauliffe, v, pp. 296-301.

2. Narang, pp. 131-132.

3. Dr. Bannerji, op. cit., ii, p. 96.

Wrong
approach

its vision with the reasonings of the material world, and presented such a distorted picture of reality, that even those who could perceive the truth themselves, were blinded to it. All the sacred books of the ancients, were not written in vain, there is truth in them, whether one can understand it or not, and those who cannot see it, the less they speak on it the better.

Nothing
wrong

There is nothing wrong in the claim that the Guru did remember his past lives, that in his previous life he was performing penance on Hem Kunt, where he did receive the order from the Omnipresent, yet Formless and Unseen, Who gave him the instructions, and he came in this world with a mission to work on those instructions. And since one of the essentials of his mission was '*saving the saints, and extirpating all tyrants*', he had purposely to have a resort to the sword, and do what he did.

Durga
worship

Blind to the actual teachings of Guru Gobind Singh, and basing their account on heresy, some writers have represented some events of his life in such a manner, that it shows utter irresponsibility, and their failure to discern facts from fables. Some European writers are conspicuous in this, and one such event mis-interpreted and mis-stated is the alleged worship of Durga by the Guru. Thus it is said that to secure energy and supervision for his mission, the Guru invited the help of a Brahman Dattanand. Under his supervision a *hom* (ceremony of burnt offering) was performed to manifest the goddess Durga, and get her blessings. M'Gregor writes thus : "A light was burned night and day in the house, and the Brahmin began to read *munters* (prayers). When another year had passed, Debee, the goddess with eight feet and eight hands, was present ! Then the Brahmin said, "I have now fulfilled my engagement, and you must supply my place so long as Debee is here. Do not be alarmed or afraid at what you may see." Gobind having armed himself took the Brahmin's place, and waited for the appearance of Debee. He continued to read the *munters* and make vows. At length Debee appeared. The goddess had a frightful aspect, and Gobind

M'Gregor
writes

Durga
appeared

on seeing her became so alarmed and frightened, that he fainted, but soon recovering, he put himself in an attitude for defence, though he was unable to utter a word. Debee seized his sword by the handle, and left her mark on it; after this she disappeared. Govind at length recovered his senses and came forth." An irregularity, however, having been committed, the Brahmin asked the Guru to cast the head of his son there. His mother, Gujri, however, refused to permit this sacrifice. "Govind hearing that his mother disobeyed his orders, swore that if she did not comply he would murder the four children before her eyes.....Finding that Goojuree was obstinate,.....he addressed his followers with a view of inducing some one to offer himself as a sacrifice. His appeal was for a long time fruitless, and Gobind was so exasperated that he cursed them all." At length twenty-five Sikhs offered their heads. "Gobind cut off one, and threw it into the fire"¹ The writer has been quoted at length without apology, to show the extent of absurdity to which he has gone.

Sikh's head
given

There are several other versions of the incident, for which we have no space here, and without entering into detailed arguments, we would simply forward that even a cursory glance over his teachings shows that the Guru never believed in any manner in the advisability of worshipping gods and goddesses, except the Almighty, Invisible and Timeless. His mission was rather to suppress the worship of such goddesses, as it is clear from his own account quoted above. The Guru writes in his *Krishan Avtar* :

Wrong

Guru
believed
only

I do not propitiate Ganesh ;

Nor do I meditate on Krishna or Vishnu.²

Of whom I have heard but whom I have seen not ;

It is His feet that I constantly meditate on.

In worship
of Timeless

1. History of the Sikhs, i, pp. 71-72.

2. Macauliffe has wrongly translated this line to connect it with the first two to mean that the Guru has heard of Ganesh, Krishna and Vishnu, but knows them not. See vol. v, pp. 310-311.

To show
futility

Since majority of the writers are unanimous that the Guru did perform *hom*, it is possible that he should have done it to demonstrate the futility of such beliefs. There is absolutely no reason to make us believe that the goddess appeared or that the Guru gave the sacrifice of any Sikh's head.

Invisible

The Guru was thus a worshipper only of the Timeless and Invisible, and he was born with a mission to preach His religion and extirpate tyrants, and to this objective he adhered upto the last of his breath.

As a
General

The Guru was unique as a General. Such men are rarely born who can start from a scratch, and yet within such a short time, can prepare such a formidable army which should be able successfully to challenge the mightiest of the powers of the time. As according to Cunningham, the wisdom which he used in the construction of forts at Anandpur, clearly proves his qualities of a General. The Guru seems to be perfect in handling almost all the weapons in use at the time, as it is obvious from his '*Shastar Nam Mala*', wherein he explains their workings. He was an expert archer, writes Senapat, and his arrows pierced through a score of people. He was an expert swordsman and an expert military planner. In every battle, although thrust upon him, he fought with a definite plan, and that was the reason why he could put up a small number of forty Sikhs against a surging mass of human heads. "No odds, however heavy, damped his valour and resolve; no personal danger made him shirk his duty. Wounds only stirred him to greater exertion."¹

*Shastar
Nam Mala*

Sirkar's
view

Sirkar writes regarding the Guru: "The Mughal Government under Aurangzeb did succeed in breaking up the Guru's power. It robbed the Sikhs of a common leader and a rallying centre. Thereafter the Sikhs continued to disturb public peace, but only in isolated bands. They were no longer an army fighting under one chief, with a definite political aim, but merely moving bodies of brigands, extremely brave, enthusiastic, and hardy, but essentially

1. Prof. Kartar Singh, p. 309.

plunderers uninspired by any ambition to build up an organised Government in the land. If Aurangzeb had been followed by worthy successor, these Sikh bands would have been hunted down as surely as the Mirzas and Champat Rai Bundela had been in the past, and Dhundhia Wang and Tantia Topi were to be under British rule."¹ Commenting on this writes Dr. Bannerji: "These statements betray such a complete misconception of Guru Gobind Singh's life-work and the ideology that he had created that one need hardly take them seriously." Replying to his points, Bannerji further writes, the Mughals did not rob the Sikhs of a common leader, the Guru himself rather left leadership to common wisdom, and leaders such as Kapur Singh and Jasa Singh Kalal were produced. It was they whom Sirkar calls roving bands of plunderers, who "blunted the edge of Abdali's aggressive power, which even the Marathas had failed to resist, and turned great triumph of Panipat into a barren victory." No worthier successor of Aurangzeb should have done better to suppress the Sikhs, than what Lahore Viceroys did. And lastly, it is wrong to compare the Sikhs with Mirzas or Champat Rai Bundela. Quoting N. K. Sinha, Dr. Bannerji fittingly concludes that it must not be forgotten that in the case of the Sikhs, "a nation was up in arms against its enemies and it is the collective efforts of the masses rather than individual achievements that ultimately made the revolution a success."²

The points raised

Bannerji's answer

Despite being a great soldier, the Guru's conduct remained saint-like. The Guru resorted to the sword only when forced to do so, and even after winning battles against the mightiest of his foes, the Guru did not claim an inch of land for his personal possession. He in fact used his sword only for the protection of the poor and the helpless, and to extirpate the tyrants, and sometimes his arrows are said each to have carried a *Tola* of gold to help the victims after they were wounded. There is the instance of *Bhai* Ghanaya, who

Saint Soldier

Ghanaya's story

1. Sarkar, iii, pp. 320-321.

2. Bannerji, ii, pp. 153-154.

in the battle-field, gave water not only to friends but even to the foes, and when the case was reported to the Guru, he patted the *Bhai* saying he had recognised the right path.

Lost every-
thing

The Guru lost Anandpur, his home and hearth, he got separated from his companions and wives, mother and sons. In the battle of Chamkaur he lost his two sons and the rest of the Sikhs who accompanied him. He moved about in the forests of Machhiwara, a king become pauper. He was all alone, and later on he got the news of execution of the rest of his sons and the death of his mother as well. Yet with

Resignation

such complete resignation did he accept all this, as if a very insignificant event had occurred. After all this had happened and after he had suffered such great loss, he sat down with a composed mind to compile a new recension of the *Adi Granth*, in which the mental exercise of the highest order was required ; and then he undertook the religious preachings in the Malwa ; as if very fresh in mind and happy of home. Such habits only super-humans, and saints of the highest order could possess. The Guru was fighting against the Muslims, the Muslims had robbed him of his family love and of everything that he possessed, yet there was not even an *iota* of hatred against them as a religion, and he preached :

Muslims
not hated

"Some men are Hindus and other Musalmans ; among the latter are Rafazis, Imams, and Shafais—know that all men are of the same caste.

No
difference

*Karta (the Creator) and the Karim (the Beneficent) are the same, Razak (the Provider) and Rahim (the Merciful) are the same ; let no man even by mistake suppose there is a difference."*¹

No
confusion

The Guru perfectly understood it that he was fighting not against the Muslims, but against the Mughal Empire ; and he never confused the two together. Amongst the best friends of the Guru were the Muslims such as Pir Budhu Shah, who sacrificed all his four sons for the sake of the

Best
friends

1. Macauliffe, v, p. 275.

Guru. And "that the Empire rather than Islam was the object of his animosity is shown by his readiness to make use of the services of Pathan mercenaries."¹

And then the Guru was a great poet, a versatile scholar and an educationist. The Guru mastered the entire range of epic literature in Sanskrit and soul stirring legends of Mahabharata and Purana. He kept in his court fifty-two poets of the highest eminence, and learnt from them everything they could teach. And at the young age of only 32, he created works many of which were destroyed in the Sarsa, but those which were saved are wonders to-day. For instance his *Akal Ustat* is a work of very high standard, and he was the first prophet who wrote the story of his Soul. He is said to be the first man who has expressed his own battles in poetry. His *Shastar Nam Mala* gives such a beautiful account of the use of weapons, that besides attracting its reader towards them, it gives him a high literary taste. His *Var Sri Bhagoti ji ki* is a poetical wonder, in which the selection of words and simile is such which creates a deep spiritual impression upon its reader. His *Chandi Charitra* contains the stories of gods and goddesses; and his *Kabit Swaya* is another instance of its own type. "*Chandi di Var*, his only work in Punjabi, is a Model *Var* of Punjabi literature."² In his Durga's story of killing a lion, the Guru uses three different languages, which only a master could do. There are several other of his works, such as *Chobis Avtar* and *Gobind Geet* etc. in the *Dasam Granth*, regarding which the critics differ if they belong to the Guru at all. His *Zafarnama* is an immortal work in Persian, which is unique for its style, expression and simile.

Most of the Guru's writings are in the form of Epic, and are full of heroic, chivalrous inspiration. He was a great linguist and an accomplished scholar of *Hindi*, *Persian* and *Sanskrit*, *Bihari*, *Brij Bhasha*, *Majhi* and *Punjabi*. In many of his works the language employed is scholarly *Hindi*

Great poet
scholar,
educationist

His works

Epic form

Linguist

1. Gough, p. 20.

2. Prof. Surindar Singh, Spokesman, G. G. No., 1957.

with its rich mixture of *Sanskritic* phraseology. In his works, the Guru does not care for traditional forms of metre, he rather gives a supreme importance to the prevailing atmosphere and ideas. Sometimes his poetry is reduced to a single-word metre, sometimes two worded and sometimes three worded, the best example of which we get in his *Jap Sahib*. His single-word metre is thus :

No tradition

ਗੋਬਿੰਦੇ ॥ ਮੁੰਕੋਦੇ ॥ ਉਦਾਰੇ ॥ ਅਪਾਰੇ ॥
ਹਰੀਅੰ ॥ ਕਰੀਅੰ ॥ ਨਿਨਾਮੇ ॥ ਅਕਾਮੇ ॥

Metres

Two worded metre :

ਜਲੇਯ ਹੈਂ ॥ ਬਲੇਯ ਹੈ ॥
ਅਭੀਤ ਹੈਂ ॥ ਅਭੇਯ ਹੈ ॥

The three worded metre :

ਚਤੁਰ ਚੱਕ੍ਰ ਕਰਤਾ ॥ ਚਤੁਰ ਚੱਕਰ ਹਰਤਾ ॥
ਚਤੁਰ ਚੱਕਰ ਦਾਨੇ ॥ ਚਤੁਰ ਚਕ੍ਰ ਜਾਨੇ ॥

The Guru wrote very little in *Punjabi*. yet he gave many wonders to the *Punjabi* literature. He is said to have been the first poet to depict battle-fields in stirring *Punjabi* language. The credit of introducing blank verse in the *Punjabi*, with such wonderful success, also goes to him. His *Chandi-de-Var* is an instance of this type.

In Punjabi

Contri-
butions

The Guru's "language, the metre, the lilt and style create a rich, strange, weird, unearthly, martial music which inspirit and inspire the reciters and listeners with mystic visions and knightly chivalry."¹ "He was a renaissance of Indian learning in himself. Once more he placed the Kathas of the Avtaras and Puranas before the people in their own language. Sanskrit had ceased to exist as a living language. He adapted ancient stories and Kathas in '*Brij Bhasha*' and popularised them. He adapted the '*Chandi Chiton*' in vigorous *Punjabi* also. It was a revival of ancient literature."²

An
appre-
ciationA Renais-
sance

The Guru sent a number of his Sikhs to Banaras to acquire the knowledge of Hindu philosophy. They came

As edu-
cationist

1. Balwant Singh, Spokesman, G. G. No. 1957.

2. Prof. Taran Singh, Ibid.

back and preached among the Sikhs and created a *Nirmala* School, which has been a bridge between the Hindus and the Sikhs. For physical training, the Guru established a school at Anandpur. The arts of war were regularly taught. Wrestling was made common, and the *Hola* festival was fixed as the day of tournaments, which continues to be so even to-day.

The Guru, besides, was a great transformer. Cunningham writes thus : "Nanak disengaged his little society of worshippers from Hindu idolatry and Muhammadan superstition, and placed them free on broad basis of religion and moral purity : Amardas preserved the infant community from declining in a sect of quietists or ascetics. Arjun gave his increasing followers a written rule of conduct and civil organisation ; Hargobind added the use of arms and a military system ; Gobind Singh bestowed upon them a distinct political existence and inspired them with the desire of being socially free and naturally independent."¹ After administering the baptism of sword, the Guru transformed the Hindus into Sikhs. But a mass of wax figures bearing the same hall-mark and dressed up in the same fashion, could not form an effective machine. He, therefore, declared that the Sikhs were under the special protection of God, and wherever five of them were present, God was present there too. They were given the appellation Singh, and they became lions. Each one of the Sikhs was equivalent to a hundred thousand men. He channelised the energy of the *Jats* which should otherwise have been wasted. Bannerji says : "Speaking dialectically, we may say that the Sikh was the thesis, the *Jat* the anti-thesis, and the synthesis came in the Khalsa."² The freebooters were transformed into a disciplined force, and the Guru laid the foundation of that kingdom, which a hundred years later, Ranjit Singh established.

The Guru used two means as a lever to raise human souls into a suitable vehicle for the creation and sustenance

Great
transformer

Distin-
guishing
marks

His lever

1. History of the Sikhs.

2. Bannerji, ii, p. 153.

of this human fraternity. The first was the principle that politics which governs relations between States, and between rulers and the ruled, should be completely in accord with the principles of ethics. The second was his *sangha* where people met morning and evening and facilitated the emergence of global fraternity. The lever worked, patriotism and nationalism became a part of religion, or as Dr. Narang says, nationalism itself became religion, and the result was the creation of a fraternity unique in character and in its programmes.

Unique
fraternity

Apostle
of
democracy

As an apostle of democracy, the "Guru not only re-affirmed the absolute equality of every Sikh in the eyes of God, but he altogether prohibited the observance of caste distinctions within the Khalsa."¹ The *Langar* and *Sangat* of Guru Nanak continued, but the new method of administering *pahul* was unique in its effect. It gave the Sikh not only a partnership of belief and practices, it gave them also the partnership of life and blood.

House-
holder

As a householder, he was "an obedient son, a considerate father, a kind master, and a loving husband." Yet he had an attachment to none. "When his mother was gone and his sons were murdered or cut to pieces, he bore these bereavements with a firmness which has no parallel elsewhere."²

A riddle

And above all, the Guru was a great riddle. "Not many understood him aright. At times for sixteen hours together he was in trance ecstatically singing "*Tui, Tui, Tui.*" When the bullets were flying about, he would sit down to chant Guru Nanak's morning service of *Asa-di-War*. For eleven months, he was alone in a solitary cave at Bhabour, on the rocky side of a cliff overlooking the Sutlej. And yet this great Saint was a great scholar and a warrior."³

All in one

1. Payne, p. 34.

2. Prof. Kartar Singh, pp. 315-316.

3. Balwant Singh, Spokesman, G. G. No. 1957.

CHAPTER XX

BANDA BAHADUR

The most important sources of information regarding Banda Bahadur are the works of the Muslim writers, some of whom were his contemporaries. But these accounts are sometimes so full of prejudice and bias that it becomes very difficult to extract from them the facts of history. Mohamad Kasim Lahori is one of these contemporaries, who was present at the *Haidri Flag* and other incidents. His book *Ibrat Nama* is an important book for the subject if carefully studied. Khafi Khan's *Twarikh* is a very partial account, yet an interesting and a very good source of information for those who can discern facts. *Muasur-ul-Umra* is an account of Muslim chiefs, but it also gives some facts regarding Banda. *Hadika-tul-Akalim* is another such source of information. *Siar-ul-Mutakhirin* also deals with the subject, but the account given is generally wrong and based on heresy. *Twarikh-i-Ahmad Shah*, written by Ahmad Shah of Batala is a better account.

Sources of
information

Muslim
contem-
porary
accounts

Besides, there is *Twarikh-i-Muhamed Shai*, written by Khushal Chand. It gives a good account of the life and career of Banda. Some early British records also deal with the subject. Thus for instance, an account of the execution of Banda is given in the early British correspondence with Farukh Saiyar. Similarly one can look into Calcutta Review, Vol. LX, with some real advantage.

Khushal
Chand

And
British

The first Sikh account of the subject seems to have been given by Bhai Ratan Singh, in *Panth Parkash*. The author was a grandson of Mehtab Singh Miran Kotiya, and his father was present in the *Ghalugharas*, and some other actions fought by the Sikhs. The author has

Sikh
accounts

based his account on the stories he heard from his forefathers. *Panth Prakash* of Bhai Gian Singh is almost a copy of the above account. But the dates given in this account seem almost all to be wrong. Some time back an account of the events in the life of Banda was prepared by some *Arya Samajists*. But this account again, is nothing but a copy of the *Panth Prakash*.

Arya
Samajist
work

Many writers of the Indian History deal with the subject. But the accounts of almost all such writers seem to be based on Elphinstone's History of India.

Elphin-
stone's
account

The account, as we get from all these sources, tells us that Banda was born at Rajauri, in district Poonch of the Western Kashmir on 27th October, 1660. His father, Ram Dev, was a *Rajput* ploughman, and his early name was Lachhman Das. In his early years Lachhman Das is said to have been given too much to chivalrous pursuits. He often went a hunting, and on one such occasion an event is said to have occurred which changed the entire course of his life.

Born 1660

Incident of
killing deer

The story goes that once when he killed a deer, she was pregnant and as she died, from her womb fell her young one, who died at the spot just before his eyes. This incident was sufficient for Lachhman Das to shock him and to make him have a review of his life and activities. Convinced of the futility of the life he had been living in the past years, he decided to renounce it, and became a *Bairagi*, under the name of Madho Das.

Renounced
world

Met Augher
Nath

Banda now roamed from place to place meeting saints and *yogis*, and finally coming at Nasik, on the bank of the Godavri, he came in contact with a *yogi*, named Augher Nath, from whom he learnt occultism, and then moved to Nander, in the Deccan, where he established his monastery.

Monastery at
Nander

Contact
with Guru

It is here that Madho Das came in contact with Guru Gobind Singh. It is said that Banda used to take delight in practicing tricks with the help of occult powers. He used to make his visitors sit on a cot, and then with his occult powers, he would upturn the cot, throwing the visitors down. When Guru Gobind Singh visited

his monastery, he tried to play the same trick on him, but here he found no ordinary mortal to be thus victimised. After having tried all his occult powers but failed, he fell at the Guru's feet and begged for pardon. The Guru asked him who he was, and in utter humility Madho Das replied that he was the Guru's *Banda*, or his slave. Pleased with his humility, the Guru patted him and giving him the title of *Banda*, he commissioned him to go to the Punjab. Although Banda did become a Sikh, he does not seem to have been given the baptism of sword. For, only a few days after Banda was commissioned, the Guru died, and Banda seems to have considered it below his dignity to accept it from the hands of the Sikhs, among whom he had already become popular and a privileged dignitary.¹

Trick failed

Became
BandaNot
baptisedEmblems
of
authorityGuru's
instructions

At the time Banda was commissioned, the Guru gave him five arrows from out of his quiver, and handed over to him his drum and banner as emblems of his authority. The Guru instructed Banda to remain pure of heart and honest. He was not to touch another man's wife, was to look upon himself as a servant of the *Khalsa*, who would be his true Guru. He was to undertake no important task without an *ardasa*, or a prayer to the Almighty. Whatever he did, he was to take in it the advice of five Sikhs. Among the five Sikhs who were asked by the Guru to accompany Banda, were Baj Singh, Binod Singh and Kahan Singh. Banda was not to found any sect, nor call himself a *Guru*. He was not to permit his victories to elate him, nor his defeats would depress him. These were in brief the instructions which the Guru gave to Banda.

Banda
marchedLearnt of
details

With these instructions, Banda marched towards the Punjab. On his way he learnt of the details of the Sikh activities in that province. He had learnt how when negotiations between the Guru and Bahadur Shah were being carried, a *Pathan* had stabbed him which resulted later in his death. The peaceful means under the tenth Guru's predecessors had failed to bring about any fruit, and the tenth Guru had to have a resort to the sword. He learnt of the Guru's victories

1. See Karm Singh Historian, *Banda Bahadur* (in Punjabi), pp. 25-26.

Became
inspired

against Hill chiefs and the imperial forces, how the Guru was deceived out of Anandpur, how he got separated from his Sikhs and the family, his two sons were executed and the other two he himself sacrificed. Banda was thus inspired not only with the spirit of revenge, but also with the mission of continuing a holy war against the tyrants. For had this not been the case, he should have stopped after he destroyed Sarhind. His mission seems to have become to extirpate the tyrants, and establish perhaps a Sikh *raj* in their place.

His mission

Hukam-
nama from
Sehr
Khanda

Marching towards the Punjab, when Banda reached Sehr Khanda, about twenty-five miles north-west of Delhi, he sent a *hukamnama* of Guru Gobind Singh, to the Sikhs, in the different parts of the country, telling them in a circular letter that he had come to punish Wazir Khan of Sarhind, and to chastise the Hill *rajas*, and calling them to join him in the largest numbers. *Panth Prakash* writes thus :

Panth
Prakash's
account

“ਲੇਵਨ ਕੋ ਬਦਲੇ ਤੁਰਕਾਨ ਤੇ,
ਮੋਹਿ ਪਠਿਓ ਗੁਰ ਸ੍ਰੇ ਕਰ ‘ਬੰਦਾ’ ।
ਮਾਰਕ ਖਾਰ ਕਰੋ ਉਬਜੀਦਹਿ,
ਦੇਹੁ ਉਜਾੜ ਲੁਟਾਇ ਸਰ੍ਹੋਦਾ ॥
ਲੇਕਰ ਵੈਰ ਗੁਰੋ ਪੁਤ੍ਰੇ, ਫਿਰ
ਮਾਰ ਗਿਰੀਸ਼ ਕਰੋ ਪਰ ਗੰਦਾ ।
ਏਤਕ ਕਾਜ ਕਰੋ ਜਬ ਮੈਂ, ਤੁਮ
ਜਾਨਓ ਮੁਝੇ ਤਬ ਹੀ ‘ਗੁਰ ਬੰਦਾ’ ॥”

Sikhs joined
him

On hearing the call of Banda, persons such as Bhai Fateh Singh, a descendant of Bhai Bhagtu, joined him with large numbers of companions. Ram Singh and Tilok Singh of the *Phulkian* family, though not joining themselves, contributed their resources liberally ; and a large number of the Sikh peasantry of Majha and Malwa, joined the banners of Banda with a zeal and enthusiasm.

Attacked
Samana

On his way to Sarhind, Banda plundered many places. He attacked Samana, the native place of Jalal-ud-Din, who had been employed in the execution of Guru Teg Bahadur. Here he is said to have killed about 10,000 Muslims who

opposed him, and gathered an immense booty. Then passing through Ghuram, Thaska, Shahabad and Mustafabad, Banda invaded Kapuri. The *faujdar* of this place had been notorious for his lustful campaigns. Kapuri was utterly plundered and finally set on fire.

Then
Kapuri

Just this time, it is said that some Hindus of Sadhaura approached Banda with a complaint that the Muslims of the place had made their life utterly difficult. They killed cows and left their entrails and blood in their streets. They were not permitted to perform their religious ceremonies. Banda also learnt that the *faujdar* of Sadhaura had tortured Pir Budhu Shah to death for his help to the Guru in the battle of Bhangani. Banda marched with his Sikhs on Sadhaura, he was joined by the local peasantry in large numbers, and soon the place became a scene of utter plunder and destruction. It is said many Muslims of the place took shelter in the mansion of Pir Budhu Shah, with the vain hope that they would escape destruction. The mansion was attacked and the Muslims in it were murdered. The place has since been known as *Qatalgarhi*.

Complaints
from
Sadhaura

Plundered

Qatalgarhi

Towards Sarhind

Banda now marched towards Sarhind. At Sarhind it was that the two youngest sons of the Guru had been bricked alive. Governor of the place, Wazir Khan had harassed the Guru, and it was fighting against his soldiers at Chamkaur that the two eldest sons of the Guru had fallen. Wazir Khan's troops had pursued the Guru, and given him a battle at Khidrana, where the 'Forty Saved Ones' had laid down their lives. It was his emissary who is later said to have stabbed the Guru at Nander. Sarhind was thus an accursed place, where every Sikh was longing to wreak his vengeance.

Causes
of attack

Hearing of Banda's approach, Wazir Khan too had made his preparations. He had called to his help the *faujdar*s of Hissar, Eminabad, Lahore and some other places. The total number of his soldiers with whom he prepared to meet Banda was said to be 20,000.

Wazir
Khan's
pre-
paratio
s

Banda's
positionMet at
Chappar
Chiri

Desertions

Personal
leadWazir
killedBattle of
Sarhind

Plundered

Horrible
destructionMuslim
accounts

For Banda this was going to be the first major clash, and the most important target of his march. Banda had no artillery, no elephants, not even a sufficient number of horses. He had been joined by a large number of booty-lovers, who despite being of an advantage, could be source of a serious menace, as it actually happened. The two opposing armies met at Chappar-Chiri, a place twelve miles from Sarhind, on the 12th May, 1710. As the battle started, the booty-lovers among the followers fled the field leaving a confusion amongst the true lovers of the cause. Some persons were also said to have been smuggled into Banda's forces by the notorious Hindu *Diwan* of Sarhind, named Sucha Nand. They also fled finding their opportunity. It was now necessary to stem the tide of desertion to avoid disaster, and Banda marched to lead the attack in person. A bloody fight ensued, which was well contested, and in which many heroes from both the sides fell fighting. At last Wazir Khan was killed by Fateh Singh, and the whole of his army was destroyed by the Sikhs. It was a complete victory for Banda, after which, says *Ahwal-i-Salatin-i-Hind*, he prepared to march on Sarhind. He attacked Sarhind, after two days of the battle of Chappar-Chiri, and here he fought another battle in which he is said to have lost five hundred Sikhs. After this victory, the town of Sarhind was given to free plunder. Many Muslims were murdered, and it is said only those escaped who fled under Hindu disguise. Sucha Nand was captured and given the punishment he deserved. A booty worth two crores of rupees fell into the hands of Banda from the house of Wazir Khan alone. Several lakhs worth of Sucha Nand's property was also plundered.

Khafi Khan gives a horrible account of the Sikh destruction of Sarhind, and he is supported by other Muslim writers. Latif writes : Banda "punished the city in a vindictive and barbarous manner. He commanded it to be fired, and all the inhabitants to be put to death.....They slaughtered the inhabitants indiscriminately without regard to age or sex. They butchered, bayoneted, strangled, hanged, shot

down, hacked to pieces, and burnt alive, every Mohamedan in the place.....The corpse of Wazir Khan was hanged on a tree, and left to the tender mercies of the crows and vultures. The sanctity of graveyards was violated, and corpses were exhumed, hewn to pieces, and exposed as carrions for the wolves, jackals, and other nocturnal visitants to these abodes of the dead. The mosques were polluted and burnt down, and the mullas, moulvis and hafizes subjected to the greatest indignities and tortures."¹ These Mohammedan writers, however, writes Thornton, are not to be relied upon. Dr. Narang writes : "The Mausoleum of Ahmad Shah, the most magnificent of such buildings, still stands as it did before the battle, and is, I think, sufficient evidence of the exaggeration in Latif's account."² There is only one instance of the digging of a grave, according to the Sikh accounts. Bibi Anup Kaur, a Sikh woman who was carried away by Sher Mohamad Khan, had committed suicide to save her honour and had been buried. Her body was dug out and cremated. And it is possible that some people should have misunderstood this fact and later, the writers like Latif exaggerating made such horrible incidents out of such simple acts.

Not to be
believed

The facts

Still, however, there is no doubt that for three full days the city continued to be plundered, and Banda Bahadur, if not that barbarous as the Muslim historians have depicted him to be, was less cautious of blood-shed than Guru Gobind Singh himself should have been, which was partly due to the revengeful spirit that he carried. The city was saved from complete destruction as a result of the intervention of the Hindus of the place.³

Three days

City saved

After this, the imperial deputies in-charge of several parganas of Sarhind submitted peacefully, and the entire Province from Karnal to Ludhiana, with an annual revenue of 36 lakhs, fell into the hands of the Sikhs. Banda appointed Baj Singh as the Governor of Sarhind, and some other

Whole
province
fell

1. Latif, *History of the Punjab*, pp. 274-275.

2. *Transformation of Sikhism*.

3. Karam Singh *Historian*, p. 77.

New
officers

places like Samana, were put under the charge of some other Sikhs.

Mukhlispur
Head-
Quarters

State
measures

Zamindari
abolished

Complaints
came

Banda's
reputation

Banda now fixed Mukhlispur near Sadhaura, a pleasant hill resort, as his head-quarters, is said to have assumed royal title and struck coins in the name of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. On the official seal for state papers, too, the name of Guru Gobind Singh was inscribed. And Banda started a new era from the date of the conquest of Sarhind. One of the most important of his state measures is said to be his abolition of *Zamindari*. The story goes that some tillers of the land in the neighbourhood of Sadhaura came to him and complained of the atrocities of *Zamindars*. Banda asked them to stand in a line, and ordered Baj Singh to shoot them down; and then with a violent voice he condemned them that such large number of them as they were, they could not put down only a small number of *Zamindars*. This had the desired effect, they went back and in a few days the *Zamindars* were no where to be seen in those localities. Banda became a defender of the faith of the helpless. Large number of people came to him every day with complaints against the Muslim officials, and Banda helped them in removing their grievances.

Within the territories held by the Sikhs themselves, violent changes were brought about on the socialistic lines. Reputation and awe of Banda spread to such an extent writes Irvine, that even if a scavenger who had joined his forces, returned to his village the wealthiest would come out to welcome him and vied with one another, to escort him home.¹

The Gangetic Doab

Complaints
against

As Banda carried on his activities, he received some newly converted Sikhs from the village Unarsa, in Jalalabad, who complained against the persecutions of the Hindus by Jalal Khan the founder and *Faujdar* of Jalalabad. Banda marched forthwith towards Jalalabad, capturing on his way,

1. See Irvine, *Later Mughals*, i, pp. 98-99.

Saharanpur, and seventeen miles from that place, killing Peerzadas of Behat to a man for their anti-Hindu activities. Messengers were sent to Jalal Khan to release some Sikhs whom he had imprisoned. The messengers were badly insulted, which enraged Banda, who ordered the siege of Jalalabad. Soon, however, the heavy rains, inundation of the Krishna river, and the urgent calls for help from the Jullundur Doab, obliged him to abandon the siege, and he ordered a retreat.

Jalal Khan

Jalalabad
investedBut
retreated

The Jullundur Doab

As Sarhind had been captured, and Banda was carrying his activities far and wide, the Sikhs in the Jullundur Doab felt that their deliverance day had arrived. They rose to a man, ousting the Muslim officials and in their place appointing the Sikhs; and sent a *Parvana* to Shamas Khan, the *Faujdar* of the Jullundur Doab to effect certain reforms and hand over his treasures personally to the Khalsa. The *Faujdar* appealed to the Muslims of the Doab for a *Jehad* against these infidels, and says Khafi Khan, as many as about one lakh Muslims collected and marched towards Sultanpur, the capital of the Doab, where according to him, about seventy-five thousand Sikhs had collected. An urgent call at this, was sent to Banda in the Gangetic Doab, who soon joined them. Seeing a large army of the Muslims marching towards them, the Sikhs retired to Rahon. The Muslims marched after them, and the Sikhs were besieged. But in the darkness of night¹, they escaped, and the next morning, seeing Shamas Khan having retired to his capital, they attacked the Muslims in the fort suddenly, and after a bloody battle, they drove out the garrison. This happened on October 12, 1710. As a result of this, Jullundur and Hoshiarpur fell before the Sikhs without much effort and they became now masters of the Jullundur Doab.

Every
Sikh roseShamas
Khan's
appeal
A jehad

At Rahon

Sikhs
Masters of
Doab

1. This shows that the number of the Sikhs here given by Khafi Khan, is exaggerated, as otherwise the Sikhs should not have retired to Rahon, and then escaped when besieged in this manner.

The Haidri Flag

This was a great victory for the Sikhs, which inspired them to further activities, and they now began to lay down wide plans of occupying the whole of the Punjab. Soon when about eight thousand Sikhs of the Majha and the surrounding countries met at Amritsar, they conferred together and decided to overrun all the territories of the Punjab. According to *Ibratnamah*¹ they marched on Batala and Kalanaur, and removing the government officials from the offices, appointed their own men instead. Moving further, they occupied the *Parganah* of Pathankot, and carried their swords to the very walls of Lahore. The *Faujdar* of Lahore, Sayyed Islam Khan, was so much overawed that he dared not come out and face them.

Finding their ruler too coward and faint-hearted to protect them, some *Mullas* collected together, raised a green banner, and calling it '*Haidri Flag*' they gave a general call to the Muslims to collect under it for a *Jehad* against the infidels, and for the protection of their properties and honour. Soon the Muslims collected once again in large numbers, and they were also joined by Hindus. Collecting together, they marched against the Sikhs, and besieged them in the Bhagwant Rai fort, near Lahore in the village Bharat. The Sikhs, however, keeping their undaunted spirits, pierced through their lines, and escaped, to the utter chagrin of the *Mullas*. The *Mullas* sent another force against the Sikhs near Kotla Begum, but it also met a similar fate. This was an end of their ambition, and they with their men, marched back to Lahore. But while they were on the move, the Sikhs fell upon them suddenly, and brought about a general destruction and utter devastation in their ranks. This was a complete victory of the Sikhs on the Muslims, whereafter the entire Majha and Riarki fell under their control.

March of the Royal Forces

Such incessant victories of Banda Bahadur and his Sikhs

1. *Ibratnamah* of Mohamad Qasim.

created a terror among the Muslims. And the contemporary writers tell us that such an awe of Banda was created in their minds that they began to believe him possessing some supernatural powers. Rumours floated about regarding him, and the people said Banda was made up of such material that no weapon could have effect upon him. Flames issued from his mouth, and he possessed a monstrous power and energy. If just about this time, Bahadur Shah had not left Deccan and marched towards the north, the whole of India, as according to Malcolm, should "have been subdued by these" invaders.

Rumours
about
Banda

Malcolm's
view

Bahadur Shah, hearing of such large scale devastations brought about by the Sikhs in the Punjab, left Ajmer on 27th June, 1710, and marched towards the north. As he marched, he issued orders to the governors of Oudh and Delhi, *Sayyads* of Barha, and the *Nazims* and *Faujdar*s of Allahabad and Moradabad, to join him. Orders were issued to all Hindu officials to shave off their heads and beards, lest they should be mistaken for the Sikhs.

Bahadur
Shah from
Deccan

Orders to
Hindus

The Sikhs, however, were not taken unprepared. As the imperial forces reached Sadhaura, the Sikhs fell upon them and, writes Khafi Khan¹ 'struck terror into the royal forces.' The imperial reinforcement, however, soon reached, and the Sikhs retreated towards the Lohgarh fort. The imperial forces marched thither, and the fort was invested. The siege continued for a long time, and the Sikhs inside were driven to such despair that they began to eat their horses and other animals. There seemed to be no end to this misery, and finally, Gulab Singh offered to sacrifice his life. He sat in Banda's disguise, and Banda in another disguise darted through the imperial lines and escaped to the safety of the Hills. Banda, writes Latif, "knew well how to disguise himself, and so dexterous was he in this accomplishment, that his most intimate acquaintances were unable to recognize him when he wished to evade detection."

At
Sadhaura

And
Lohgarh

Banda
escaped

1. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*.

Emperor's
dismay

Next morning, the imperial forces marched upon the fort, Gulab Singh was captured, but to his utter disappointment and dismay, the Emperor learnt that Banda had escaped towards the Hills. The pursual of Banda into the Hills was immediately ordered.

In the Hills

Banda in
Hills

Kehlur
attacked

Others

Marched on
Jammu

Emperor's
order

Emperor
died

Confusion

Farrukh
succeeds

Banda's
advantage

When Banda reached the Hills, with the same spirit and energy, he continued his activities. *Hukamnamah's* were issued to the Sikhs in all directions, and soon the Sikhs flocked at Kiratpur. With this fresh force, Banda now decided to attack the Hill *Rajas*. The first victim of Banda was the *Raja* of Kehlur, who was defeated in a pitched battle. The chiefs such as Sidh Sain of Mandi, declared themselves to be the followers of Guru Nanak's faith, and escaped. The chief of Mandi gave Banda in marriage a girl from his family and thus secured himself against the Sikhs. Banda marched on Jammu, and killed its *Faujdar* on the 4th of June, 1711. Raipur, Behrampur, Kalanaur and Batala fell before him, and Banda strengthened his power. Bahadur Shah issued orders that wherever a Sikh was found, he should be killed. A large number of the Sikhs were thus butchered, and the imperial forces marched in pursuit of Banda, at the face of which, Banda had to retire to Jammu again.

Bahadur Shah retired to Lahore, where he died on 18th February, 1712. His death was followed, as usual, by the struggle for power among his sons, and confusion and anarchy ensued once again. Bahadur Shah was succeeded by Jahandar Shah, but he was soon ousted, and the throne was now occupied by Farrukh Siyar in 1713.

During these commotions, descending on the plains, bordering on the Indus, the Sikhs again flocked around the banner of Banda, who reoccupied Sadhaura and Lohgarh. In the meanwhile, however, Farrukh Siyar having come to power, determined on the extirpation of the Sikhs. Abdul

Samad Khan, surnamed Diler Jang, a Turani nobleman, who was the governor of Kashmir, was ordered by him to assume the command of the Punjab, and punish the Sikhs. Abdul Samad Khan marched with several thousand brave men, and reached Lahore, where he was joined by Mohamad Amin Khan, who had been sent thither by the Emperor with large number of chosen soldiers from the eastern districts. Banda on hearing this again fled and took refuge in Jammu Hills, where now he married his second wife. He made his abode at the present Dera Baba Banda Singh, where his descendants still live. Banda now did not move to the plains for another one year.

Imperial
army
against
him

Banda back
in Hills

Mohamad Amin Khan was now recalled to Delhi, and Abdul Samad Khan being appointed Lahore Governor, was ordered to restore order in the Lahore territories.

Abdus
Samad
Lahore
Governor

Captured

After a respite of about one year, Banda once again marched to the plains and captured Kalanaur and Batala. About thirty-five thousand warriors flocked around his banner, and he prepared for bigger ventures. The *Faujdar* of Ambala, Sheik Mohamed Daem, tried to encounter him, but was given a bitter defeat, and he fled to Lahore. Abdul Samad Khan, now Governor of Lahore, moved against Banda, and he was reinforced by the imperial troops under Mir Ahmad Khan, the *Faujdar* of Aurangabad. Some Hindu chiefs were also ordered to join him, and the combined forces fell upon Banda. In a desperate action, Banda showed great valour, and according to Siyarul Mutakhrin, he was very near giving a complete defeat to the imperial general; but having no strong position for defence, he had to give way to superior numbers. Banda was now driven from place to place, until he reached the village Gurdas-Nangal, about four miles west of Gurdaspur. Finding his position desperate, Banda here occupied an *ihata* of Bhai Duni Chand, dug a moat around it, filled it with water, and determined to give a determined fight to the enemy. This small and temporary fortress was, however, invested by the enemy troops, till at last the be-

Banda in
plains

Pursued

Driven
At Gurdas
Nangal

Besieged
Sikhs
caused
terror

sieged were driven to a desperate plight, eating horses and asses. But before this was done, Banda and his Sikhs caused a terror in the enemy lines, forty or fifty Sikhs sallying out occasionally and looting the provisions from the enemy stores. As according *Ibratnamah* : "Such was the terror... commander of the royal army prayed that God might so ordain things that Banda should seek his safety in flight from the *garhi*."

Binod
differed
with Banda

As the condition worsened, differences arose between Binod Singh and Banda. The former advised that they all should cut through enemy lines and escape, while Banda persisted in remaining there. Some hot words were also said to have been exchanged between the two, and finally, on the advice of his son Kahan Singh, Binod Singh dashed out, and cutting through the enemy lines, escaped. Inside the *garhi*, the things grew worse, eight months' siege reduced the Sikhs inside to grinding bones, leaves and bark of the trees into flour, and making bread of it. Finally, on 7th December, 1715, the imperial forces marched on the *garhi*, no resistance was offered, Banda and his companions were put in chains, and sent to Lahore. Between two and three hundred Sikhs of those captured here, were "bound hand and foot and made over to the imperial troops, who, under the orders of the nawab, carried them to the banks of the Ravi, and there, having beheaded them, threw their bodies into the river."¹

And
escaped

Banda
captured

Sikhs
beheaded

Reasons for
Banda's
failure

Several reasons have been forwarded for this ultimate defeat of Banda. The most important reason obviously being the exhaustion of the Sikh provisions. Besides, here the Sikhs were facing the imperial forces, which were better disciplined, and had inexhaustible source of supply behind them ; whereas on the other hand the Sikhs had only the strength and determination of their spirit to commend them. The joining of the Hindu chiefs against Banda, had weakened his moral stand, and according to some, his invention of the new salutation, *Fateh Darshan*, in place of *Wahe Guru Ji ka Khalsa, Sri Wahe Guru Ji ki Fateh*, had

1. Latif, p. 279.

alienated many a Sikh against him. The difference of opinion between him and Binod Singh at this moment was unfortunate, and there is no doubt that this weakened the Sikh resistance. All these causes, however, even if accepted, would make only a minor factor leading to his defeat. The major factor, it must be said, was the superior number of the enemy troops, and Banda having been taken by surprise, when he did not even have the privilege of a strong position of defence.

To come back to the main story, Banda and some of his associates were taken to Lahore, where by killing Sikhs in the villages, their number was swelled to 740. "They were mounted upon lame, worn out hungry asses and camels, each of them having a paper cap on his head. In this condition they were led into the streets of Lahore, followed by a mob which jeered and cursed them."¹ On the following day, Abdul Samad Khan took these Sikhs to Delhi, putting his son Zakaria Khan, as in-charge of the prisoners during the journey. Banda was confined in iron cage. M'Gregor writes, the Muslim soldiers "maintained that Banda was a "magician," and would make his escape on the road. One of the Moghuls rose and said, "Tie us together on the same elephant and if he attempts to escape, I will plunge this dagger into his body." Banda was accordingly tied to this man....."²

Banda
taken to
Lahore

To Delhi

At Delhi, the Sikhs were treated with the greatest ignominy. A procession was formed. At the head 2,000 Sikh heads were carried on poles, with their hair streaming in the air. Along with them was the body of a cat to signify that no creature was left in the *garhi* of Gurdas-Nangal. In order to give them a contemptible and ludicrous appearance, the Sikhs "were forced to dress themselves in sheep skins, and were then mounted on asses and camels, and exhibited in all the thoroughfares and places of public resort of the city." "Banda was placed on an elephant, with his face smeared with black, and a woollen cap placed over his head, and an

A
procession

1. Latif, p. 279.

2. History of the Sikhs, i, pp. 109-110.

Hundred
executed
a day

A boy's
spirit

Baj Singh's
tamasha

executioner standing over him, sword in hand. He was made to take the lead, as their mock chief."¹ Mirza Mohammed Harisi describes it as a great *tamasha*,² when crowds stood on both sides of the road, and they mocked at them. The carnage began on the 5th March 1716, and one hundred Sikhs were executed every day near the Hardinge Library. But such was the undaunted spirit of the Sikhs, that they vied with each other to come to executioner, and called him a *Mukta*, or a deliverer. According to Khafi Khan, a young Sikh boy rebuked his widow mother, when at the time of his execution, she brought for him an order of reprieve. And according to Mehma Prakash, when the Emperor sent for Baj Singh to see him as he had been specially blessed by Guru Gobind Singh for his bravery, the Sikh asked him to be freed if he wanted to see a *tamasha*. His fetters were removed, and instantaneously he despatched two or three of his captors to the other world, when finally he was apprehended, and executed.

Banda Executed

Not left
alive

Giani Gian Singh's view that after being dragged behind an elephant, Banda was thrown in an unconscious state on the bank of the Jamuna, from where after recovering he moved to Dera Baba Banda to die in 1741, is not borne out by contemporary and other writers. The more accepted view is that Banda was executed on 9th June, 1716.

Horrible
execution

Very horrible details are given regarding the execution of Banda. After being given the usual choice to accept Islam or to die, out of which he accepted the latter, his two years old son Ajai Singh was placed in his lap, and he was asked to kill him, which according to Cunningham, he instantaneously did.³ According to Elphinstone⁴ and Harisi,⁵ however, he refused to do so. The baby was taken and

1. Latif, pp. 279-280.

2. See his *Ibratnama*.

3. Cunningham, p. 79.

4. History of India.

5. *Ibratnama*

dashed against the ground, its quivering heart was taken out and thrust into Banda's mouth. After this Banda's right and then left hand, his right and then left eye, were cut off and removed. His feet were similarly cut off. His body was then torn to pieces with red hot irons, and thus did this man of "undoubted valour" and bravery, meet his death with exemplary coolness of mind,¹ and "glorying in having been raised up by God to be the scourge of the iniquities and oppressions of the age."² His body was later removed by the Sikhs of Delhi, with a special permission of the authorities, and cremated near Bara-pula.

Babe's heart

Torn to pieces

Cremated

Banda's Achievements

Varying opinions have been forwarded regarding Banda. Contemporary Muslim writers have painted the picture of his character in the darkest, and basing their accounts on these writings, many European writers too have failed in giving him a kind consideration. Cunningham writes thus : "The memory of Banda is not held in much esteem by the Sikhs ;... He did not perhaps comprehend the general nature of Nanak's and Gobind's reforms."³ Similar views are forwarded by M'Gregor.⁴ The basis on which he has been condemned is that he was a monster, who shed a lot of innocent blood of the Muslims without any compunction. Sometimes Banda is compared with Guru Gobind Singh, and it is asserted that had the latter been alive, he should have been less retributive against the Muslims than the former was. Some even go to such extent as to say that Guru Gobind Singh's widow, Sundri, did not like the activities of Banda and in collusion with the Mughals, she even asked the Sikhs to dissociate themselves from Banda.

Dark picture by Muslim writers

By Europeans

The basis

So far as the first point is concerned, that Banda shed innocent blood, and that he had a general hatred against the Muslims, we need cite only one example to prove the futility

The points answered

1. M'Gregor, i, p. 111
2. Elphinstone, History of India.
3. Cunningham, p. 79.
4. M'Gregor, pp. 110-111.

No dis-
crimination

Guru's
attitude
same

Sundri did
not differ

of his claim. It is said that during Banda's stay at Kalanaur in April 1711, as an official news writer wrote to Bahadur Shah, after he gave them an assurance of non-interference in their religion, and due payments to them, about 5,000 Muslims enlisted themselves in his army and fought against their own brethren. The point need not be laboured beyond this. Nor is it certain that the Guru himself should have been less retributive where Banda was more. The Muslim barbarism had already crossed the limits of the Guru's toleration. The bricking alive of the innocent little sons of the Guru at Sarhind was not less barbaric than the worst barbarism of Banda, and at least at Sarhind, where Banda's barbaric activities are said to have reached their climax, there is little doubt that the punishment the Guru "would have inflicted on the Mussulmans, though differing in kind, would have been equally ample with that bestowed by Banda."¹ And lastly, the fact of *Mata Sundri's* difference with Banda itself does not seem to be borne out even by the most unkind of the contemporary Muslim writers. *Tazirat-us-Salatin* of Kamwar Khan, which gives almost a daily account of the events on the front against Banda, makes no mention of this, which if true, should have been regarded as a very important development. Later writings like *Mehma Prakash* of Sarup Singh and *Umdat-ul-Twarikh* of Sohan Lal also do not bear it out; nor any of the European writers, such as Thornton and M'Gregor make a mention of it. The fact is mentioned only by Bhangu Rattan Singh in his *Prachin Panth Prakash*, which may well be based on a wrong information.

A lesson to
be taught

Banda in fact was neither a monster, nor a ruthless blood-sucker. An utterly irresponsible and prodigious treatment had been meted out towards the Sikhs by some religious fanatics and morally perverts at Sarhind. They had to be taught a lesson, and if Banda transgressed some limits which may have been observed by the super-humans such as Guru Gobind Singh, he was after all a disciple, and not a master, human and not a super-human. The greatest service that

1. M'Gregor, p. 110.

Banda rendered to his country was that he organised a revolution, and gave a fore-taste of independence to his countrymen, but for which the course of future history of India should have been different from what it actually has been. The spirits had been aroused by Banda, the Sikhs continued following the path he laid down, and finally, not only gave a death blow to the Mughal authorities in the Punjab, but even blunted the edge of Abdali's invasions, and rolled them across the Indus, who otherwise should undoubtedly have swept whole over India, and destroyed even the memory of what had in the ancient times been the glory of Hindu culture and civilisation.

Banda
organised
revolution

Banda in fact was the first man in the Punjab to realise that the only escape from the Mughal atrocities and religious persecutions was to destroy the Mughal empire itself. Guru Gobind Singh had won battles, but not appropriated any political authority to himself. Banda replaced Muslim Government officials with the Sikhs, and made a start towards creating the Sikh State. His administrative measures showed the way his mind was working. After the conquest of Sadhaura, Mukhlis-pur and Sarhind etc., all these territories were placed under Sikh administrators. His companion and counsellor, Baj Singh, was appointed the Governor of Sarhind, Fateh Singh was handed over the charge of Samna, and Ram Singh, the brother of Baj Singh assumed jointly with Baba Binod Singh, the charge of Thanesar. Banda fixing his headquarters in Sadhaura, started the repair of its hitherto neglected fort, renaming it Loh Garh. He assumed royal authority and struck coins which on their obverse bore the inscription :

Developed
political
authority

Assumed
royalty

"By True Lord's grace is struck the coin in the two world :

His coins

*Guru Nanak's sword is the grantor of all boons, and
victory belongs to the king of kings, Guru Gobind
Singh."*

On its reverse the coins read :

*"Struck in the city of Peace, illustrating the beauty of
civil life and the ornament of the blessed throne*

"The kettle and the sword (which are symbols of Charity and Power), Victory and patronage obtained from Guru Nanak and Gobind Singh."

Abolition
of
Zamindari

The most important state measure of Banda, however, was his abolition of *Zamindari*. *Zamindars* were the bane of the obtaining administrative system, in whose affairs the state did not interfere, and who had been utterly oppressive and tyrannical towards the tillers of their land. The author of *Sahib-ul-Akhbar* writes : "The affairs were mismanged in all the provinces and no control was maintained over the government officials or the *Zamindars*. All classes of government were addicted alike to corruption and extortion." We have studied how when a few tillers came to him with a complaint against their *Zamindars*, he inspired them, and soon they ejected the *Zamindars* from the lands they tilled. Their example was copied by others, and thus *Zamindari* was abolished in many parts of the Punjab. In fact the oppressive *Zamindars* of U. P. and other provinces of India, have been conspicuous by their absence in the Punjab, and thanks to Banda, much of their foundation was destroyed by him, and this evil could never later grow on this land into that monstrous shape as elsewhere.

Punjab
saved

Great
general

The
difficulties

Banda was a great general and a conqueror. There is no doubt that Guru Gobind Singh breathed a new spirit in the Sikhs, but, writes Dr. Narang, "it was Banda who taught them first how to fight and conquer," with the result that the whole country from Lahore to Panipat lay for once, particularly at Banda's feet."¹ It was unfortunate, however, that only poor Sikhs and not many rich joined him and helped him.² Hindus generally kept aloof, and some chiefs such as Bachan Singh Kachhwaha and *Rajas* of the Shivalik Hills, rather took an active part against him. Farrukh Siyar was a too vigorous a ruler with the policy of "slay, slay and slay," and under whom the Governors like Abdul Samad Khan had to play a very cautious part. And the Sikhs had no well

1. Narang, p. 184.

2. Karam Singh, *Banda Bahadur*, pp. 194-195.

established arms supply, Banda not possessing the position of the tenth Guru so that the Sikhs, rich and poor should have flocked to him with presents of arms. It is also alleged that Banda failed to act on the advice of 'Five Sikhs,' as enjoined by the Guru; if he himself had not received the Sikh baptism, as Karam Singh holds, keeping of long hair should not have been essential in his camp; he substituted '*Fateh Darshan*', in place of the salutation '*Wahe Guru ji ka Khalsa, Sri Wahe Guru ji ki Fateh*,' and though later he withdrew the new slogan, many Sikhs should definitely have been estranged against him, as Rattan Singh Bhangu claims; and he was a *vaishnava* as against the Sikhs being meat-eaters. He is also alleged to have founded a new sect of *Bandeis*, or the followers of Banda as the eleventh Sikh Guru, as against the *Tatwa Khalsa*, who considered Guru Gobind Singh to be the last Guru in human body; though it is held by some writers such as Karam Singh that it was only a later development, those not differing with Banda's views in his own time though being called *Bandeis*, never became a sect distinct from other Sikhs. Banda himself is alleged to have said at the time of his execution, as according to *Mehma Prakash*, that "what power had any one to kill me? The order of the True Guru (Guru Gobind Singh) was contravened by me, and this is the punishment for that." These factors might have worked against Banda, but for which, according to some writers, he should have succeeded in completely exterminating the Mughals. Yet taking into consideration the victories he got and the seeds of a revolution which he sowed, his achievements as a General, were great.

Banda's failures

Order contravened

Yet great

He was the most daring and the bravest in the field, even to the extent of recklessness. He was the most cruel to the cruels, and the training which he gave to the Sikhs in the battle fields of Samana and Sarhind etc., instilled in his workers a will for emancipation and a confidence for success. An expert marksman, the confidence with which he wielded

Daring

The training

Marks man

his sword, elicited a praise even from the bitterest of his foes.

His
religious
zeal

Nor he was second to any body in his zeal and love for Sikhism. Whatever important work Banda undertook, he started only with an *ardasa* or prayer to the almighty. Whosoever came in his contact, Banda told him to repeat Name, and remember that they were all humble instruments in the hands of the Almighty Lord. He converted a large number of Hindus and Muslims to his faith, but there is no evidence that he used any force in doing that.

But no
force

Humble
and honest

Despite all the Banda's shortcomings and failures, till the last of his breath, Banda remained humble of his attitude and honest of heart. His letters show that he never appropriated to himself the position of a *Guru*. His coins and seals bore only the name of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. In the midst of all the temptations which his position offered, he never touched a stranger woman. He was a strong lover of justice, who heard complaints of the poor and helpless and punished the tyrants and oppressors. Despite all allegations against him, he differed seriously only with Binod Singh, and that too only on tactics of war and not on religious principles. If he remained throughout his life a vegetarian, that was no anti-Sikh practice.

Not anti-
Sikh

Spirit
strengthened

He strengthened among the people the will to resist tyranny, from wherever it came, whether from the State or from capitalists or zamindars. And the coolness with which he got his skin torn into pieces, and resolution of mind with which he resisted all the temptations of a princely life after accepting Islam, will always give him a prized position in the Indian history, of an illustrious hero whose memories any nation would be proud to own.

Illustrious

CHAPTER XXI

THE DARK PERIOD

Banda died in 1716, and the period between that year and 1733, is considered to be the darkest period of the Sikh annals. Abdus Samad Khan, a Turani nobleman was the governor of the Punjab, who was determined to annihilate the Sikhs. Nor was Farrukh Siyar, the Emperor of Delhi, kind in this respect. After the execution of Banda, thus writes Forster : "An edict was issued by Farruck Sir, directing that every Sicque falling into the hands of his officers, should, on a refusal of embracing the Mohametan faith, be put to the sword. A valuable reward was also given by the emperor, for the head of every Sicque; and such was the keen spirit that animated the persecution, such the success of the exertions, that the name of a Sicque no longer existed in the Mughal dominion. Those who still adhered to the tenets of Nanock, either fled into the mountains at the head of the Punjab, or cut off their hair, and exteriorly renounced the profession of their religion¹." Abdul Samad himself fulfilled the terms of the Emperor's orders to such an extent in the Majha that he "filled that extensive plain with blood as if it had been a dish."² And he thus earned the title of "sword of the state." When he became old, he was transferred in 1726, to the governorship of Multan, and his vigorous and youthful son, Zakariya Khan Bahadur, was now appointed to the viceroyalty of Lahore.

Zakaryia Khan was no less a tyrant than his father, and he continued the policy of the Sikh persecutions more vigorously. He introduced a departure from the old policy of his father, of taxing the people heavily and throwing them into the Sikh

1716 to 1733
the darkest
period

Farrukh
Siyar's
policy

Ruthless-
ness of
Abdul
Samad

and
Zakariya

Zakariya
more
vigorous

1 Forster's Journey Bengal to England, i, pp. 312-313.

2 Elliot, viii, *Muntkhabul Lubab*,

fold. The policy followed by him now was duel : whereas on the one hand he pressed Sikh persecutions more vigorously on the other hand he showed kindness towards those plundered by them, and repaired the ravaged areas, to make the Sikh friendship less desirable to the inhabitants of these localities.

Division
among
Sikhs

1. Gangu
Shahis

Differed on
baptism

On the other hand, for a number of years after the death of Banda, the Sikhs had no temporal leader, who could be of a stature high enough to unite all the Sikhs together. The Sikhs were divided among themselves. Of several parties and sects among them, the one was *Gangu Shahis*, or the followers of Gangu, who had been blessed by Guru Amar Das. The incumbent of his *Gaddi*, at the time, was Kharak Singh, who considered himself to be a spiritual leader. His followers quarreled with the *Khalsa*, and the most important point of difference between the two was that the *Gangu Shahis* believed in the old system of baptism in which water was touched with the Guru's toe, and administered to the disciples. The *Khalsa*, on the other hand, considered the baptism of sword of Guru Gobind Singh to be now the only valid method of admitting one in the Sikh faith. Kharak Singh, however, is said to have suffered in a duel of miracle, and his prestige was on the decline.

2. The
Handalias

Another sect was known as *Handalias*, later known as *Niranjanias*. The sect had been founded by one, Handal of Jandiala, a devoted Sikh of Guru Amar Das. Bidhi Chand, the grand son of Handal, took to himself a Muslim mistress. The sect became independent, and they were rather known to have helped the Muslims against the Sikhs.

3. Ajit
Singhis

The third was the *Ajit Singhis*. A boy, Ajit Singh, had been adopted by Guru Gobind Singh's wife, Mata Sundri, who when grew up at Delhi, and began to imitate the late Guru, entertain a retinue, hold court, and call himself Guru. He was sharply reprovved and cursed by Mata Sundri. Once for his passing of some derogatory remarks against Islam, he was ordered by the Emperor to cut off his hair, or bear the proper punishment. He did the former, and lost thus much

of his former prestige. Shortly after this, however, he lost his life, when having killed a Muslim faqir, he was arrested, tied to an elephant's tail, and dragged through the city when at a turning, the elephant trod on his head, and brains oozed out, causing his death. His son Hathi Singh, was taken to Mathura, but he too growing old, abstracted hymns from the Granth and making certain changes, began to pass them as his own, with the result that Mata Sundri abandoned him and came back to Delhi.¹ He had his own followers, who were known as Ajit Singhis, after the name of his father, and who considered Ajit Singh and Hathi Singh as Gurus.

Hathi
Singh

4. Minas
5. Dhirm-
malias
6. Ram-
raiyas

Among the old sects of *Minas*, *Dhirmalias* and *Ramraiyas*, though now ineffective, still continued their existence.

7. The
Udasis

The sect of *Udasis* continued in existence, but they instead of being harmful, proved to be very helpful to the Sikhs. Being unbaptised, they escaped persecutions at the hands of the Mughal authorities; and when every Sikh was hunted out as wild beast, and many of them fled from the plains, these *Udasis* helped them as the custodians of their temples, and kept the torch of Sikhism alight. The *Nirmala Sadhus*, who did not marry, and whose activities were confined to the Malwa, which was not a very much disturbed area, also continued their help to the Sikhs in the missionary activities.

8. Nirmala
Sadhus

The most serious challenge to the *Khalsa*, however, came from the *Bandeis*. Although for sometime, Banda does seem to have become proud of his position, as is obvious from his introduction of new salutation '*Fateh Darshan*', and it seems that he did never receive the baptism of sword; there is no strong evidence to prove that *Bandeis* became a separate sect in the time of Banda himself. Nor is there any strong evidence to show that at the suggestion of Farrukh Siyar, Mata Sundri addressed any circular letter to the Sikhs condemning the activities of Banda. It is a historical fact that Baba Kahn Singh and Baj Singh, who had been

9. Bandeis

Not created
in Banda's
time

1. Macauliffe, v, pp. 254-257.

staunch followers of Guru Gobind Singh, by whom they were sent to accompany Banda as his companions; remained with Banda till the end. If Banda had founded some sect of his own, different from the *Khalsa*, these Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh should have definitely dissociated themselves from him.

The proof

Automatic development

Causes

Yet it is a fact, that though not encouraged by Banda, some such development was taking place during his very life time. The incessant successes of Banda had created an impression in some minds that Guru Gobind Singh himself had taken the garb of Banda, and come to avenge the execution of his sons. When Banda had come into the Sikh folds, he had brought in with him many of his old beliefs of a *Bairagi* intact. He was a strong vegetarian, and it is possible that those who came into closer contact with him, also became so, and were distinguished from the rest of the Sikhs. Such persons began to be called *Bandeis* in the very life time of Banda. But this was an automatic development, and *Bandeis* and Sikhs were two brothers to live and die together.

Bandeis & *Tat Khalsa* differences

After the death of Banda, however, there developed serious differences between *Bandeis* and the *Khalsa*. The former believed in Banda¹ as the eleventh Guru after Guru Gobind Singh, used red livery as against the blue of the *Akalis*, and were vegetarians. After some years of Banda's death, when Abdul Samad Khan's attention was diverted towards the rebellion of Isa Khan and the Sikh persecutions were slackened for some time, both the *Bandeis* and the *Tat Khalsa*—those who believed in Guru Gobind Singh as the last Guru in the physical body—met at Amritsar, under their respective leaders, Mahant Singh and Kahn Singh, and the *Bandeis* began to claim one half of the offerings. They also

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1. The *Bandeis* in the present, twentieth century, believe Ranjit Singh, Banda's son to be their twelfth Guru, and Ranjit Singh's sons, Jujhar Singh and Jorawar Singh, to be thirteenth and the fourteenth Gurus. These four names are included in the Sikh prayer, *ardasa*, after the name of Guru Gobind Singh.

occupied the *Har Mandar*, while the *Tat Khalsa* took *Sri Akal Takht* under their control. The differences between the two became more serious on the *Baisakhi* of 1721, and *Mata Sundri* sent *Bhai Mani Singh* to restore peace between the two. On *Bhai Mani Singh*'s suggestion, it was agreed that on one piece of paper *Fateh Darshan*, and on another *Wahe Guru ji ki Fateh*, should be written, and that the both should be cast in water near the *Har ki pauri*, whichever of the two floated first on water, that party will win. His being done, the *Bandeis* lost the game. After this a duel was also fought on a similar condition between a *Bandeis* and a member of the *Tat Khalsa*, in which again, the *Bandeis* had to face a discomfiture. The *Bandeis* after this, had to withdraw their claims, and thus, peace was restored. Still, however, it took quite some time before the *Bandeis* and the *Tat Khalsa* could come completely together.

Peace in
1721

Bandeis
defeated

Sikhs Kept Their Spirits Alive.

Such divided state of affairs among the Sikhs, and the Government's policy of annihilating them continued making the Sikh life utterly difficult for a pretty long time. After *Abdul Samad Khan*, his son *Zakaria Khan* continued sending flying columns to capture the Sikhs and to butcher them. And the Sikhs had to take refuge in the Malwa desert, the lower spurs of the Himalayas, and the Lakhi jungles, where they lived on wild vegetables and flesh of the jungle animals. But such was the spirit and strength of heart among them that they bore all these privations very cheerfully. As years of persecutions passed by, the constant fear of death made them bold, and sufferings rather lost their meanings to them. Many a Sikh was born during the life of such turmoils and privations, and the children who grew to manhood under such circumstances, had learnt to embrace the sufferings and privations as their very life companions, without which there was no significance of their existence.

Factors
which
kept their
spirits alive

Constant
fear

Old
memories

Besides they had before them the vivid memories of the sacrifices made by *Guru Arjan*, the confinement of *Guru Hargobind* in the *Gwalior fort*, the execution of *Guru Teg*

Bahadur, and the sacrifices made by Guru Gobind Singh and Banda Bahadur. The tenets of Nanak and Gobind had "taken root in the hearts of the people ; the peasant and the mechanic nursed their faith in secret, and the more ardent clung to the hope of ample revenge and speedy victory."¹ The daily prayer in which the sacrifices of their ancestors were recounted, gave them inspiration, and they were determined not to lapse into the old state of the things, from which their forefathers had dragged them out at the heavy cost of the lives of several generations. Trained in the school of Guru Gobind Singh, they were past-masters in self-sacrifice, and kept constantly before their mind the words of the founder of the Khalsa that "when my end approaches, I desire to die in active field " If in idleness they had more chances to be killed, why not then die fighting heroically in the battle-field ? They had their *Guru-Granth* and *Guru-Panth*. They sat round the first and obeyed the decisions and orders of the second. Once a decision had been taken in the presence of *Guru Granth*, it had to be obeyed even at the cost of their lives. And the decisions which they took collectively in congregations, were always decisions of heroic deeds, and selfless service.

And then they had a faith in the righteousness of their cause. They claimed only a right to live an honourable life, and this had been denied to them by the Mughal Government. The Mughal tyranny had to be destroyed, and for this they had a faith in their future. Every morning they repeated in their prayer that a time would come when the *Khalsa* would become a ruler and their internal strength and external organisation gave them confidence, that just as after Guru Gobind Singh, they got leadership from Banda, after Banda some leader was bound to come who would save the work of the ten generations of their Gurus from destruction.

Moreover, though outlawed by the Government, they were helped secretly by the common man among the Hindus.

1. Cunningham, p. 92.

Many Hindu *Zamindars* sympathised with them, and gave them whatever assistance they could give.

Then of the negative causes which helped the Sikhs in keeping their spirits, and later led to their re-emergence, the most important was the dissensions among the courtiers at Delhi itself, who would let go the Emperor to dogs, than a rival succeed in his mission. The viceroys in Punjab had to be more cautious and heedful of the political developments at Delhi, than pay their full attention towards the Sikhs in their Province. There was a disruption whole over the country, and disintegration in all the departments of the political life of the country. Within a generation after the death of Aurangzeb, Mohammedan "adventurers had established separate dominations in Bengal, Lucknow, and Hyderabad." The Marathas had established their authority in the Deccan, and the Afghan colonists of Rohilkhand and the Hindu *jats* of Bhartpur had raised themselves to importance as substantive powers.¹ In the Punjab itself, the scant means of communication made it impossible for the Government to deal with the Sikhs successfully. And all these were the causes which helped the Sikhs to keep their spirits alive.

Dissensions
at Delhi

Disruption

Poor means
of commu-
nication

Stirred to Action

The life of extreme poverty and utter helplessness in the jungles and deserts, rather taught them new arts of existence, and the Sikhs took to adventures, which helped them in plundering the enemy camps, whenever they got the opportunity to do so. The story of their such adventures started with the martyrdom of Bhai Tara Singh. This brave man lived in a village in the Majha, named Dhillwan. He had incurred the enmity of the *Lambardar* of the village Nowshera, named Sahib Rai, who had driven out from his village some poor Khalsa peasants, who were given refuge by Bhai Tara Singh. A few days after the peasants took refuge with Tara Singh, some of Sahib Rai's mares were stolen in broad daylight. He suspected these peasants for the theft and asked

Tara
Singh's
martyrdom

Refuge to
Sikhs

1. Cunningham, p. 91.

Tara Singh to deliver them to be brought to justice. Tara Singh refused to deliver the peasants, whom he knew to be innocent. The *Lambardar* lodged a formal complaint with the city Magistrate at Patti ; and presented Tara Singh to be a rebel and disturber of peace. The city Magistrate, Mirza Ja'far Beg, taking the *Lambardar's* statement as gospel truth, marched with a detachment of a few hundreds of cavalrymen under the command of his nephew, to take Tara Singh in his *garhi* by surprise at night. But when the detachment reached near Tara Singh's village, one of his companions, Baghel Singh was incidentally out to perform his ablutions. When he saw these Turk soldiers advancing towards the village, he immediately sensed the danger, and fell upon them with his small axe like a lion, cutting instantaneously the two of the Magistrate's nephews to pieces. He himself was ultimately killed, but by this time the tumult of the fray had roused his companions, who marched swiftly to meet the enemy. The Magistrate, however, had enough of it, and dissipated at the loss of his two nephews, he retreated without giving the Sikhs a battle.

Attack
failed

Governor
approached

The Magistrate of Patti after reaching back home, proceeded immediately to approach Zakarya Khan, the Governor, who was soon persuaded to send a punitive expedition consisting of 4,000 strong, under the command of General Moman Khan. On the other hand Bhai Tara Singh, with his men who did not number more than four hundred, ill equipped though, prepared to meet the enemy. The victory of such small number of men over such large an army, well equipped and well provisioned, was, of course, out of question. But they did bring a havoc in the ranks of the army, and were finally killed to a man. This happened in 1725.

Sikhs
destroyed

Atmosphere
charged

This event charged the atmosphere. The Sikhs whole over the Province burnt with the spirit of avenging the death of Bhai Tara Singh and his companions. Thousands came out with a determination to root out the evil, and joined the *Jatha* of Bhai Darbara Singh. One of these persons was young Kapur Singh, who was destined to play a significant

role in the history of the Punjab. The Sikhs gathered in large numbers at Amritsar¹, and passed a *Gurmata*² to loot the imperial arms and revenue supply, whenever they got the opportunity to do so, and to teach a lesson to the miscreants. Only a few days after this, on receiving the information that a revenue amounting to four lakh rupees was being sent from the Multan territories to the imperial treasury, under the protection of two hundred strong, about four hundred Sikhs collected and fell upon them near the Khudiyān *pargana* of Lahore. The entire amount of money, together with a number of horses of the killed and injured among the enemy, and their weapons, were collected, and the Sikhs vanished into the swamps of the Ravi.

Sikh
retributions

Just two months after the above incident, the Sikhs under the command of Darbara Singh, looted another one lakh rupees, similarly going from Kasur to Lahore. In the same year, a famous trader of horses, named Murtza Khan, who was taking a few thousands of these animals to Delhi, was plundered by the Sikhs under the command of Kapur Singh near Jandiala. The Sikhs made a surprise attack, and each Sikh leaving his thin and lean animal, vanished with an imperial horse.³ After this, Muhamed Jaffar Khan, an imperial officer, who was going from Peshawar to Delhi, was dispossessed of several lakhs worth of gold and silver, at the time of his crossing the river Beas. An instance of the high moral character that these Sikhs possessed, is available from the fact that once in 1727, they fell upon Pratap Chand, a very rich trader of Sialkot, and dispossessed him of valuable shawls and rugs, worth several lakhs of rupees, which were meant for the imperial family. But later on when they learnt that those articles had yet to be paid for by the Government, considering it the personal property of a Hindu brother, the Sikhs returned to him the entire baggage, along with several animals which they had driven away. Several

More
retributions

High moral
character

1. Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash*, p. 529.

2. A resolution.

3. *Shamshir Khalsa*, ii, p. 214.

other instances of such daring acts performed during this period, are known in history.

Zakariya
failed

Reconcili-
ation

Why
darkest

Zakariya Khan made several efforts to punish the Sikhs. Thousands were butchered, yet the number of the Sikhs who occasionally plundered the imperial treasuries and destroyed the government officials and their agents, continued to increase. Ultimately Zakariya Khan, realising that it was utterly difficult to annihilate the Sikhs, decided to adopt a policy of conciliation by offering them a *Jagir*¹ with an annual revenue of one lakh rupees, and the title of *Nawab* for their leader. "This policy bore its desired fruit. The Sikhs, being tired of their long and tedious life, accepted the *Jagir* and title. They now took to peaceful pursuits and most of them settled at Amritsar."² This happened in 1733, and thus ended the darkest period of persecutions and ruthlessness towards the Sikhs. Although the Sikhs had to face yet worse persecutions in the years to come, any period of their subsequent history was comparatively less onerous and less potent of the factors which should have led to the complete annihilation of the Sikhs, than the one discussed above. Besides the persecutions, the more serious problem for them here, was the divided state of affairs among themselves, more so when for the first time after Banda, they were left with none to lead them and inspire them. It took quite some time before a universally acceptable leader was born among the Khalsa.

1. See the next chapter.

2. H. R. Gupta, *Later Mughal History of the Punjab*, p. 54.

CHAPTER XXII

THE SIKHS UNDER NAWAB KAPUR SINGH, AND THE VICEROYS OF LAHORE

A—Early Life of Kapur Singh, and Zakariya Khan (1726-1745)

The title of Nawab and the Jagir which Zakariya Khan offered, was conferred by the Sikhs on their most respectable leader, Kapur Singh. Before we study how it was done, it would be interesting to have a short account of early life of this hero. Son of Chaudhri Dalip Singh Virk, of the village Kaloke in pargana Sheikhpura, Kapur Singh was born in the year 1697. In his very young age Kapur Singh is said to have been given very keenly to the military tastes, and he was yet young when he became a master in riding, and in wielding the weapons of war, such as sword, spear and bow and arrows. It is said that once, in a sham fight with some of his companions, by an accident, he got a stroke of a companion's sword on his shoulder. He got seriously wounded and it seemed as if the end of his life had arrived, but although the wound took a long time to heal, he ultimately recovered, and was restored to his youthful activities. On the *Baisakhi* of 1721, when the fate of the *Bandeis* was decided at Amritsar, Kapur Singh was one of the several young men who received the baptism of sword. After the martyrdom of Bhai Tara Singh, he joined the *jatha* of Dewan Darbara Singh together with some of his companions, and in the years that followed, he distinguished himself as a man sagacious and prudent beyond his years. He led the Sikhs in several of their adventures and proved himself to be a successful leader and an organiser. In 1726, Zakarya Khan became the viceroy of Lahore, with the help of the prime minister of Delhi, Qamr-ud-din Khan, whose sister was married to him.

Kapur
Singh,
Nawab

Born, 1697

Sham fight

Seriously
wounded

Baptism
1721

Joins
Darbara
Singh

Plundered
treasuries

Under Zakariya Khan, as we have studied, the Government's policy became more vigorous and repressive towards the Sikhs. Kapur Singh headed a band of warriors who, with a view to paralysing the administration and obtaining food for themselves, when they had been driven into jungles and deserts, attacked government treasuries and caravans moving from one place to another. Such was the effect of the Sikh depredations that Zakariya Khan was obliged ultimately to seek reconciliation with the Sikhs.

Reconcili-
ation

On the suggestion of Zakariya Khan, the central Government decided to withdraw all their repressive measures against the Sikhs. Subeg Singh, a Sikh resident of the village Janbar, near Lahore, who had for a time been a *Kotwal* of the city under the Mughal government, was sent to the Sikhs at Amritsar to negotiate peace. The Sikhs had been permitted to assemble on *Baisakhi* at Amritsar after several years. When Subeg Singh brought the offer of the title of Nawab and jagir worth a lakh of rupees of annual revenue, the Sikhs after some discussions, agreed to accept the offer. Darbara Singh was first chosen for the honour, but he having excused himself for his old age, the next choice fell upon Kapur Singh, who at the time was waving a hand-fan over the assembly, to soften the rigours of a hot day. Kapur Singh first showed some reluctance, but ultimately agreed to accept it. The role of honour, which consisted of a shawl-turban, a jewelled plume, a pair of gold bangles, a necklace, a row of pearls, a sword, and a brocade of garment; was first placed, at the suggestion of Kapur Singh, at the feet of the 'Five Beloveds', and then given over to him, who now looked very magnificent in his new accoutrement.

Kapur
Singh
honoured

Kapur Singh, who now became *Nawab* Kapur Singh, however, did not permit himself to lose his native humility, and requested the Khalsa to permit him continue serving in the community kitchen. The first job of Kapur Singh, after receiving this unique honour was, to inform all the Khalsa who had been hiding themselves in remote deserts and jungles, of the new development, and assemble them all at

Amritsar. In the year 1734, in order to consolidate the entire disintegrated fabric of the Sikh commonwealth, he divided them into two parts ; the one was named *Budha Dal*, or the army of the old gentlemen, which was to consist of all the Sikhs of or above the age of forty years ; and the other was named *Taruna Dal*, and it was to consist of youthful Sikhs below the age of forty.

Two Dals
organised

The *Budha Dal* was entrusted with the duty of looking after the Sikh holy places and of propagating the Sikh faith. And Kapur Singh himself was to be the incharge of it. The *Taruna Dal* was to be a more active body, and was to undertake the defence of the Sikhs as its main duty. Personally enjoying universal respect for his humility and strength of character, Kapur Singh worked as a common link between the two wings of the *Dal Khalsa*.

Their
functions

Soon after this, when the strength of the *Taruna Dal* grew to as many as 12,000 members, for efficiency and convenience of administration, the *Nawab* split this *Dal* into five sections, each led by Baba Dip Singh ; Karam Singh ; Baba Kahn Singh and Binodh Singh ; Dasondha Singh ; and Vir Singh and Jiwan Singh respectively. Each of these sections had its own drum and banner, and to avoid conflict and confusion the territories conquered by each were entered in its respective paper, known as *Misl*, at *Akal Takhat*, and this later, seven more such sections being added, led to the establishment of twelve *Misls*, of which we shall have much to say in the following chapters.

Origin of
Misls

In the same year, 1734, Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, who had been brought up under the care of *Mata Sundri*, was entrusted for his training and future career to the *Nawab*. This young boy soon made a mark of his personality and capabilities among the Sikhs, and was destined to take charge of the *Khalsa* leadership after the *Nawab*.

Jussa Singh
Ahluwalia
introduced

It had never been hoped by the Sikhs that the peace established between them and the government would last long. Neither the Sikhs could contain their ambitions within

Peace
broken

Enmity
again

the small *Jagir* that was granted to them, nor the government was likely to continue suffering a tremendous increase in the number of the Sikhs, and their efficient organisation on war-like footings. Just before the harvest of 1735, Zakariya Khan sent a force and occupied the *Jagir* granted to the Sikhs on the pretext that the Sikhs had violated their promise of remaining peaceful. The *Budha Dal*, after this, was driven away to the Malwa by Lakhpat Rai, the *Dewan* of Lahore, where it was received with a welcome by Ala Singh, the founder of the Phulkian *Misl*, who also availed of the opportunity, and received baptism at the hands of Kapur Singh. Nawab Kapur Singh here occupied himself for sometime in the propagation of the Sikh faith, and also baptised Hamir Singh, the ancestor of the Faridkot house. The Nawab also helped Ala Singh in the consolidation of his territories, and conquered him some new of them such as Sunam. He also led an attack against Sarhind, and pillaged it once again.

Nawab in
the Malwa

Zakariya's
persecutions

In the meantime Zakariya Khan resorted once again to the old practice of persecutions. Eight moving columns of one thousand light cavalry each were raised, and they were ordered to capture the Sikhs. A proclamation was issued declaring that any body who produced Sikh heads would be rewarded at the rate of fifty rupees each head. For presenting an alive Sikh, again, the reward was fifty rupees; for giving an information regarding a Sikh, the reward would be ten; for help in arrest, rupees fifteen; and anybody could plunder a Sikh's house without a fear of being brought to justice. On the other hand punishments were fixed for failure of the people to co-operate in this respect. Hundreds of Sikhs were thus captured and they were killed in the most cruel manners, the most popular method being crushing the victims on the wheels. Other methods were equally barbarous. The victim would be buried half under ground, and the upper half would be blown away from the mouth of a cannon. Their eyes were taken out, and sometimes tying each foot with an elephant's leg, the two elephants were made to walk

The
punishment

towards opposite directions and the victim was torn into two pieces. Rattan Singh¹ writes thus :

ਕਈ ਚਰਖੀ ਕਈ ਫਾਂਸੀ ਮਾਰੇ ।
 ਕਈ ਤੋਪਨ ਕਈ ਛੁਰੀ ਕਟਾਰੇ
 ਕਈਅਨ ਸਿਰ ਮੁੰਗਲੀ ਕੁੱਟੇ ।
 ਕਈ ਡੋਬੇ ਕਈ ਘਸੀਟ ਸੁ ਸੁਟੇ ।
 ਦਬੇ ਕਟੇ ਬੰਦੂਕਨ ਦਏ ਮਾਰ ।
 ਕੋਣ ਗਣੇ ਜੋ ਮਰੇ ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ।
 ਪਾਂਤ ਪਾਂਤ ਕਈ ਪਕੜ ਸਰਾਏ ।
 ਸਾਥ ਤੇਗਨ ਕਈ ਪਕੜ ਉਡਵਾਏ ।
 ਕਿਸੇ ਹੱਥ ਕਿਸੇ ਟੰਗ ਕਟਵਾਈ ।
 ਅੱਖ ਕੱਢ ਕਿਸੇ ਖੱਲ ਉਤਰਵਾਈ ।
 ਕੇਸਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਜੋ ਨਰ ਹੋਈ ।
 ਬਾਲ ਬਿਰਧ ਲੋਭ ਛੱਡੇ ਨ ਕੋਈ ।

The Sikhs once again fled to jungles and deserts, and the life of utter poverty and homelessness started. The Sikhs, however, never lost their hearts. During this period they seem to have remained in very high spirits and bore their privations very cheerfully, as it is obvious from the new terms of the available humble articles of consumption, of contemptuous expressions for the enemies, and other such things, that they invented. About nine hundred of such terms have been discovered, some of which may here be given. During this time, a blind man began to be known as a wide awake hero, death was an expedition to the other world, hungry man was considered as mad in prosperity, to speak was to roar, passing stool was supplying provisions to *Qazi*, when they saw night soil, they said Mughal was lying there. *Rupiya* was known as empty crust, grams known as almonds, cooked meat as *Mahaprashad*, *Sag* as green *plao*, onions as silver pieces ; one man was known as one and quarter lakhs, to fight a battle was to play *hola*, sword was *Sri Sahib* and gun a *Ram junga*. One man was also known as army and several men as armies. To make water was to conquer

Sikhs kept
spirits

New terms

1. *Prachin Panth Prakash*, p. 278.

Chittorgarh, one eyed man was hundred eyed hero, shoe was a mare, and a cottage a *shish-mahal*.

Back to
Amritsar

With the approach of the winter, the Nawab decided to come back from the Malwa and celebrate his *Diwali* at Amritsar. As he approached Amritsar with his *Budha Dal*, The imperial force under the command of Haibat Khan, Diwan Lakhpat Rai, Salabat Khan and Kutb-ud-Din Khan, fell on him at Basarka Bir. It was a surprise attack, yet the *Budha Dal* fought so valiantly that it remained a drawn battle.

Drawn
battle at
Basarka

Imperials
defeated at
Hujra Shah

The next morning when the *Budha Dal* reached near Khem Karan, it was joined by *Taruna Dal*. On the other hand a reinforcement under Samad Khan also reached the imperial army at Basarka Bir. When Kapur Singh heard of the movement of the imperial army, he moved to Hujra Shah, and here the Sikhs were once again attacked by the imperial soldiers. Here a decisive battle was fought in which the imperial army were utterly routed, and fled after suffering a great loss, leaving the battle-field in the hands of the Khalsa. Several thousands of the imperial soldiers are said to have lost their lives here, of whom a nephew of Lakhpat Rai, a son of Jaspat Rai, Tatar Khan, Jamal Khan, and Duni Chand may specially be mentioned. This battle was fought in 1736.¹

Venerable
Bhai Mani
Singh

It seems that while the activities of clearing particularly the Majha country of the general mass of Sikhs went apace, there were some more venerable personalities among them, who because of their influence with the Muslim authorities, or otherwise because of some other reasons, were left unmolested. One such personality was *Bhai Mani Singh*, who was incharge of the Amritsar temple, which remained open during this time, though ultimately he too could not escape execution at the Muslim hands, though from a different reason. A short account of the fate this, one of the most

1. See *Shamshir Khalsa*, ii, p. 218 ; Dr. Narang, pp. 196, 207 ; Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash*, p. 576.

venerable figures of the time among the Sikhs, met, may here be given.

For an introduction to his early career, we learn that the *Bhai* was born in the Malwa, at a village known as Kobewal. He was only seven years of age, when his father, a *Jat* by birth, took him for a visit to Guru Teg Bahadur, at Anandpur. Here for sometime, Mani Singh remained in the company of the boy Gobind Rai, and got so much attached to him that he refused to part company. At the request of Guru Teg Bahadur, therefore, Mani Singh's father left him to remain there, and to share with Gobind Rai, the same board and lodging under the loving custody of Mata Gujri, and even same teachers who imparted education to the prospective Guru. When, after the evacuation of Anandpur, the Muslim forces fell upon the Guru on the bank of the Sarsa, it was *Bhai* Mani Singh who, in the confusion thus caused, took Guru Gobind Singh's two wives, Sahib Kaur and Sunder Devi, in male disguise to Delhi; and after this when the news, of the Guru having reached Damdama, arrived, he took them thither. *Bhai* Mani Singh also accompanied the Guru to the Deccan, where from, he was sent back to attend upon the Guru's wives at Delhi. Later on, as we have studied, when a quarrel arose at Amritsar, between the *Bandeis* and the *Tat Khalsa*, Sunder Devi deputed him to go there and settle the dispute, whereafter, the *Bhai* remained at Amritsar as incharge of that temple.

As a result of the relentless policy of Zakariya Khan's persecutions, when the Sikhs stopped visiting the Amritsar temple as in the times of peace they used to do, the *Bhai* tried to mollify the authorities with gold, and made a proposal to Abdur Razak, the local magistrate that if the Sikhs were permitted to come at a fair at Amritsar, the authorities would be paid a sort of fee of Rs. 10,000. The proposal was forwarded to Zakariya Khan, and he permitted the Sikhs to assemble. The *Bhai's* purpose seems to be that, that might soften the Government's policy of ruthless persecutions, and

Born at
Kobewal

Company
of Guru
Gobind

Same

Confusion
at Sarsa

To Deccan

Delhi

Settled
dispute

Mollify with
gold

At
Amritsar

Surprise
attack

the Sikhs might be permitted to resume their worship in the temple. But Zakariya Khan was perhaps determined to deceive the *Bhai*, and secure an opportunity of making a surprise attack upon the Sikhs. *Bhai* Mani Singh sent messages far and wide, and the Sikhs did gather in large numbers, and the forces of Zakariya did fall upon them. But this was not unexpected, the Sikhs had made their preparations and they vanished once again before the Mughal soldiers could wreak a vengeance upon them.

Sikhs
vanished

Money
demanded

After the event had occurred, and the Sikhs had dispersed, the stipulated amount was demanded from the *Bhai*, but he showed his inability to pay it because of the violation of the promise by the authorities resulting into poorer proceeds of the offerings. No reason or arguments, however, could be listened to. The *Bhai* was forthwith arrested and brought to Lahore, the alternative between Islam and death was offered to him, he, of course, accepted the latter, and his limbs were publicly torn off. This happened in 1737, and an officer, Samad Khan, played a significant role in bringing about this execution, for which he had later to pay with his life.

Torn to
pieces

Abdul
Rehman

Occupied
Amritsar

Sukha
Singh and
Braj Singh

After the above referred incident, Zakariya Khan called a conference of some important civil and military officers, in which Qazi Abdul Rehman advised that since the main source of inspiration for the Sikhs was the temple of Amritsar, it should be taken possession of and guarded by military to prevent the Sikhs from visiting it. This advice was accepted, and Abdul Rehman himself was entrusted with this job. During all this period, Kapur Singh remained a guiding spirit, and from their abodes in jungles and deserts, he continued sending occasionally, bold riders in disguise or openly, to assert their right to have a dip in the Amritsar tank. Once, it is said, *Bhai* Sukha Singh of Mari Kamboh came along with Braj Singh, a nephew of *Bhai* Mani Singh, he dashed to the tank and after having a dip, the two fled on their horses to join several hundred Sikhs awaiting outside. Abdul Rehman supposing that they were only two Sikhs, taking a few soldiers, followed them up, but it was a surprise to him when

he saw them joining the Sikhs awaiting outside. He, however, attacked the Sikhs, in which again, the Muslims suffered a heavy loss, and Abdul Rehman himself lost his life.

Muslims
suffered

Such heroic tales of the Sikhs terrified Zakariya Khan, and he sent a large force under Samad Khan, to seek out Kapur Singh. Once Samad Khan did succeed in engaging the *Budha Dal*, but he, as it was his habit, remained in the rear relying on his deputies to fight the battle. This Samad Khan had been responsible for the tortuous death of Bhai Mani Singh, and Kapur Singh determined to draw him out in an open contest, had recourse to a strategem. He divided his men into two sections, one of which was sent to face the enemy. After some fight, this section began to withdraw, Samad Khan taking it as a flight ran up in pursuit. But as soon as Samad Khan left his position, another section, waiting in a hiding, under Kapur Singh, fell upon him. Samad Khan was captured, tied behind four horses, and was dragged to death. And in this manner Samad Khan paid the price of being instrumental in the execution of *Bhai Mani Singh*.

Engage-
ment with
Samad
Khan

Samad
killed

After this *Nawab* Kapur Singh decided to kill Zakariya Khan himself, who because of Sikh terror, remained for most of his time inside the fort. Kapur Singh got an intelligence that Zakariya Khan was to attend a prayer at the Shahi Mosque at Lahore. With two thousand of his picked men, all dressed in green, their hair streaming in air after the manner of the disciples of the priests of Uch, and a *Hydari* flag to lead them, Kapur Singh entered the city shouting *Alla-hu-Akbar*. Incidentally, however, the governor, being indisposed, did not stir out that day, to the utter disappointment of the *Nawab*. The Sikhs knowing this, threw off their disguise and shouting *Sat Sri Akal*, they marched out and vanished into their forest retreats.

Attempt to
kill
Zakariya

Failed

After this, Kapur Singh marched once again towards the Malwa. Crossing the Sutlej, he proceeded towards Delhi, and on his way, realised tributes from the chieftains of Jhajjar, Dadri, Dojana and Pataudi; and over ran the territories of Faridabad, Ballabgarh and Gurgaon. Thus,

To Malwa

Delhi

after reaching the vicinity of Delhi, the Dal marched back.

B—Invasion of Nadir Shah and the Sikh Opportunity

Nadir

Born, 1688

Invited to
India

At Lahore

Delhi
Emperor
defeated

From January to May 1739, there was a complete confusion at Delhi and Lahore. During this period, Nadir Shah led an invasion into India. Born in 1688, in a castle fifty miles north of Mashhad, the capital of Khorasan, Nadir Kuli belonged to a Turkoman tribe, known as Afshars. From a petty freebooter, Nadir was destined to become the terror of the whole of Asia. After several years of his daring and adventurous life, Nadir Kuli was saluted the king of the Persians under the name Nadir Shah, in 1736. He soon conquered Kandhar, Balkh and Bokhara, and being invited by Nizam-ul-Mulk and Sadat Khan, the two disaffected nobles of the Mughal court at Delhi, he invaded India with an army of 1,25,000 horse, Kazil-bashis, Georgians, Turks, Khorasanis, and Balkhis etc. all inured to fatigue and hardships. He captured Jallalabad and Peshawar, and crossing Jhelum and Chenab, proceeded towards Lahore. Zakariya Khan with his 25,000 horse, was completely routed in a battle, and implored the invader's clemency. On the payment of a tribute of twenty lakhs of rupees, Lahore was saved from the horrors of a massacre. Zakariya Khan was confirmed in his government of Lahore, Nadir Shah struck a gold coin at Lahore on the obverse of which was the inscription "Nadir, the Sultan," and on the reverse: "Struck at the capital of Lahore, 1151, May God preserve his reign !" And thereafter the Shah proceeded towards Delhi. On the 14th February, 1735, Nadir reached the plains of Karnal, where Muhammed Shah, the Emperor of Delhi, had already reached with his 150,000 horse, exclusive of irregular cavalry, two days earlier. The attack was led by the Indian army, and the battle started, but the effeminate Indian army soon proved itself quite unable to cope with the valour of the hardy Turkomans, and were soon defeated with a heavy slaughter of one hundred nobles and officers of distinction, and thirty thousand soldiers.

The Indian Emperor, thereafter begged for clemency and

agreed to pay an indemnity of twenty-five *Karors*, and also to Nadir's troops remaining in the capital to recover from the fatigue of the campaign, until such time as the money should be paid. The two Emperors then marched to Delhi, where the treasury was stripped of the most valuable articles, and *Khutba* was read in the name of Nadir. Every thing was going on peacefully, when an unfortunate event occurred. A Persian soldier forcibly tried to seize some pigeons exposed for sale, a mob collected and in a fit of frenzy, and rage, rushed upon the Persians in different parts of the city, killing about three thousand of them. Nadir Shah himself was fired at in the mosque of Raushan-ud-daula, where he had repaired. The shot which came from a neighbouring terrace, missed him, and killed one of his immediate attendants. The fierce spirit of the Shah was roused to fury, and unsheathing his sword, he ordered general massacre of the inhabitants of the city. Guns were now ordered out and streets swept with grape. "The bloody scene extended from *Sarafa Ardui*, in front of the fort, to *Idgah*, which is three *Kos* distant, and from *Chitti Kabar* as far as the tobacco market and *Pul Mithai*. The whole of the *Dariba Bazar* ran red with the blood....Neither sex nor age was spared. Before two o'clock in the afternoon, it is computed, between 120,000 and 150,000 were slaughtered." Nobles approached the Shah requesting him to spare the city, saying: "Not a soul has been spared by the avenging sword. If it be thy wish to carry on the work of destruction any further, infuse life into the dead and renew the slaughter."¹ Nadir granted the request.

Begged for
clemency

At Delhi

Des-
truction
at Delhi

None
spared

Collected
immense
wealth
Marriages

Regalia of the Mughal Empire was seized, citizens put under contributions, contributions were levied on the governors of provinces, and Nadir started from Delhi on his back journey with immense wealth, which included gold, silver, jewels, the famous *Kohinur*, and rich stuffs. He married his own son Nasrullah, to the daughter of Aziz-ud-din, the grandson of Aurangzeb, and himself wanted to marry

1. See Latif, pp. 194-205.

the beautiful daughter of another noble, Muzaffar, but was prevented from doing so by one of his wives. At the time of his departure, he sent a messenger to Zakariya Khan to pay another *Crore* of rupees, which the latter collecting it from his nobles and merchants of the city, paid. Before starting on his back journey, Nadir also collected a large number of "elephants, horses, camels and valuable furniture, and the most skilful workmen and artisans, numbering several hundreds."¹

In the confusion that was caused as a result of this invasion of the unfortunate country, the Sikhs were fortunate in having the leaders like Kapur Singh, Bagh Singh and Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. Taking an advantage of the situation, the Sikhs spread whole over the north-east of the Punjab, and carried their exploits. They built during this period a mud fortress at Dallewal to act for them as a place of refuge and retreat. Situated on the Ravi, within dense forests and commanding rich and fertile tract, Dallewal offered an excellent situation for the purpose to which it was to be used. The whole of Upper Bari Doab, where Banda had been arrested, was laid under contribution. And when Nadir's soldiers passed through the Punjab on their back journey, over loaded with booty, and walking slowly under the terrible heat of May; the Sikhs fell upon them several times, dispossessing them of a large amount of wealth, and setting at liberty many of the Indian artisans and others being carried as captives.

The Sikhs made their first attack on the Nadir's rear on a dark night, when it was heavily raining, on the bank of the Chenab, before Nadir crossed it.² And these attacks continued to be made on every second or third night, from different directions, till Nadir left the Indian soil. Being deeply annoyed, Nadir demanded from Zakariya : "Whence come those long-haired barbarians who dare to molest me ?" "They are a group of faqirs who visit their Guru's tank twice a year, and bathing in it they disappear", came the

1. Ibid, pp. 206-207.

2. Forster, *Journey*, i, p. 113; Sinha, *Rise of the Sikh Power*, p. 12.

More from
Zakariya

Sikh
opportunity

Dallewal
fortress
built

Sikhs
plundered
Nadir

First on
Chenab

Nadir's
enquiry

reply. "Where do they live?" "They live on the saddles of their horses", was the reply. "Then be careful," Nadir said, "for it will not be long before they occupy your country."¹

Zakariya Khan took Nadir's warning to heart, and added four-fold vigour to his policy of persecutions. Strict orders were issued to officials and headmen not to give refuge to Sikhs, and Adina Beg was specially appointed to exterminate the Sikhs from the Jullundur Doab. A vigorous campaign was started to hunt them in the hideouts to which they had been driven. And the governor's persecutions went to such a furious extent that even the use of the word *Gur*, (molasses) was forbidden lest it may remind one of the Sikh *Gurus*.

Zakariya's
persecutions

Orders

A special mention may here be made of some of the more important sacrifices made by the Sikhs. As a result of the new and more vigorous policy of destroying the Khasla, every village, every hamlet, and every town began to serve as a slaughter-house, "where God's innocent creatures were butchered. Every tree served as a gibbet and every dark, neglected well became a Drug² into which people, professing the Khalsa faith, or men, suspected of being in sympathy with them, were thrown indiscriminately, and were then left to die of hunger, or be stifled by their foul and poisonous stench. In a surprisingly brief period, the whole land was cleared of the Khalsa."³

Sikh
sacrifices

One, Bhai Bota Singh, a Sikh belonging to the Majha country, suffered such fate, and homeless, he wandered about in jungles to save his life from the persecuting hands. He, however, occasionally visited human habitation in order to get some food. On one such occasion, he was noticed by some *Zamindars*, who suspected him to be a Sikh. Bota Singh, however, over-heard one of them saying that he must be a

Bhai Bota
Singh

1. See Gordon, pp. 57-58.

2. "A dark well where into criminals were thrown to die."

3. Bhagat Lakshman Singh, 'Sikh Martyrs', pp. 125-126.

No coward

Behrupia,¹ otherwise a Sikh could not be so coward to move like as he did in disguise. Cut to the quick, Bota Singh immediately decided to do away with his game of hide-and-seek, and occupying a dilapidated inn built by Nur-ud-din, near Tarn Taran, he repaired it with the help of a companion, and began to work as an in-keeper. Here, during the day, the two Sikhs supplied food and water to the way-farers, and also levied a tax of one anna for every carriage, and a pie for every donkey load that passed by. Besides they received complaints from the Hindu parents regarding forcible snatching away of their children, and other such atrocities visited by the Muslims upon them, and during the night, they carried raids on the Muslims, punished the miscreants, and restored the children to their parents.

A tax

Regiment
came

They, however, could not carry on such activities for a long time. The matter having been reported to the Lahore governor, a regular regiment was despatched to teach the two Sikhs a lesson. The inn was besieged, but from behind the parapet, these two Sikhs are said to have pierced many by their arrows to death, and wounded several others.² The account may be exaggerated, but there is no doubt that these two Sikhs put up a valiant fight, and the inn had ultimately to be taken by an assault, the two Sikhs being killed in the fight. This happened in 1739, and the Mughal soldiers returned beating the drums of victory, in their effort to conceal that such large operation had been carried, to deal with mere two Sikhs.

Drums of
victoryMehtab
Singh
Sukha
Singh

Massa

Another daring deed was performed by Mehtab Singh and Sukha Singh. After Abdul Rehman had been killed at Amritsar, one, Massa Rangar Mandyalia was appointed as the Kotwal of the city. Massa sat inside the temple, and there, with dancing girls to pacify his passion, and wine to quench his thirst, he defiled the sanctity of the place, where

1. A person following the profession of appearing before people disguised differently, and thus realising from them petty sums of money as a mark of their appreciation.
2. Bhagat Lakshman Singh, p. 129.

scriptures used to be read, and God used to be praised. The blood-curdling details of such deeds reached the Sikhs in their hide-outs, and sent thrills of horror into their nerves. The news of this also reached one Mehtab Singh, who during the days of utter persecutions, having left his village, Miran Kot, near Amritsar, had taken up a service at Bikanir. His spirit revolted within himself, and taking with him Sukha Singh of Kambho Mari, he prepared the steeds and galloped towards Amritsar. They purchased a few bags, filled them half with stones and half with coins, and dressing as revenue collectors, presented themselves at the gate of the temple, demanding permission to enter and present the revenue to Massah. The permission was forthwith granted, and the Sikhs entering Massah's presence, made their obeisance. As Massah bent to receive the money, down came a falchion, and like a flash of lightning, Mehtab Singh severed Massa's head from his body, and the two Sikhs rode back brandishing their swords, and leaving behind a mass of terror-stricken attendants and people looking aghast.

At
Amritsar

Killed

Measures were immediately taken to get hold of these daring Sikhs, but they bore no fruit. This happened in 1740. Shortly after, however, when Mehtab Singh visited the village Jandiala, to see his son, somebody informed of it to the authorities, and Mehtab Singh was captured. His son, a small boy, was snatched away and dashed to the ground, and his dead body was left to be torn away by vultures and kites. Mehtab Singh himself was taken to Lahore, where he was crushed on the wheels. Sukha Singh was also shortly after traced out, and done mercilessly to death.

Sikhs
punished

Another martyrdom was that of a boy named Haqiqat Rai, merely seventeen years of age. Haqiqat Rai was born in 1724, and his father, Diwan Bagh Mal, an official in the local court, was a well-to-do Khatri of Sialkot. While still young, Haqiqat Rai was married to the beautiful daughter of a well placed Sikh of Batala, in the Gurdaspur district, named Kishan Singh. Although not yet baptised, the boy had a zealous and devoted attachment to the Sikh faith. He had

Haqiqat
Rai

Quarrel
with
Muslim
teacher

been given for sometime to the care of a Muslim teacher, who one day, is said to have passed some disrespectful remarks against Hindu gods. Haqiqat's feelings were injured, and he did likewise against the character of the Prophet of Islam. The matter became serious, and it being reported to the local authorities, the boy was snatched away from his parents, and put under arrest. Due to the local influence of his father, however, the local authorities thought it prudent to take the case to Lahore, where it was given over to the Chief Qazi. The boy's father approached Dewan Jaspat Rai, and then Dewan Lakhpat Rai of Lahore to intervene in their behalf, but both the brothers returned only an evasive reply. An influential deputation consisting of Lala Dargahi Mal, Dewan Surat Singh and Jamadar Qasur Beg, then waited upon the governor, but here too nothing came out of the efforts. A proof of the prevailing religious depravity and moral bankruptcy was given by the Chief Qazi, who in a mock trial, sentenced the boy to death. But the boy was not to be executed without the severest tortures. Being chained to a pillar, he was brutally caned. But such was the valour and strength of the boy's spirit that not for a moment did he show any apologetic look. The caning was continued till the boy bled to unconsciousness. He was then executed on the scaffold, and his body was cremated near the mausoleum of Shah Balawal. This happened in 1742.

Approaches
failed

Boy
executed

Khalsa
approached

Retri-
butions

The boy's father-in-law and other relatives then approached the Khalsa for retribution. The reply was prompt, and not long after this incident, one night, a surprise attack was made and the Muslim teacher with whom the trouble started, was killed. The Chief Qazi who condemned the boy to death, was likewise punished, and the heads of the miscreants were exhibited in the market-place.

Bhai Taru
Singh

Another such illustrious figure, which met a similar end was that of Bhai Taru Singh. Taru Singh was an agriculturist of middle class standard at Poola in the Majha country. His crime was that he dared give refuge to some homeless Sikhs who had been under a ban. For some time he seems to have

escaped unmolested, till one Bhagat Nirangni, a khatri of his village, reported the case to the authorities out of some enmity. The case soon reached the governor of Lahore, Zakariya Khan himself, who was given an exaggerated account of the Bhai's activities, hostile to the State. The Bhai was ordered forthwith to be captured and brought to Lahore, where he plainly admitted of what he had been doing. The order was given that the head of Taru Singh, be clean-shaven. The Bhai was chained, and a barber approached him for the purpose. But with a shake of his head, the Bhai is said by the Sikh accounts to have sent his assailant away, whirling on the ground. A shoemaker was then tried to scrape off his head, but he also met a similar fate. A carpenter then cut off Taru Singh's head, with a stroke of his adze, which after this was exhibited in the market-place. This happened in 1743. The story goes further. Immediately after the Bhai's death, Zakariya Khan is said to have got a severe attack of pain in his kidney, which was attributed "to his unrighteous persecution of Bhai Taru Singh. He sent messengers to the Khalsa asking for forgiveness. For a time, the Khalsa had some respite and were allowed to return to their homes."¹ This last part of the story may, however, seem difficult to understand, when we know that Zakariya's policy of relentless persecutions continued even till after his death. Moreover hundreds of Sikhs were being butchered, some of whom died often a cruel death on the wheel. If Zakariya Khan could see all this done, it should not have been difficult for him to swallow the execution of Bhai Taru Singh.

Captured

Head cut
with adze

Zakariya
swallowed
it

Zakariya
failed

Zakariya Khan continued to live for two years more after this event. And during these two years there seems to have been no slackness in his stern policy of persecuting the Sikhs. But all accounts agree that despite his spending millions of rupees, and sacrificing some best of his officers in effort to annihilate the Sikhs, he ultimately failed in his mission, and died on 1st July, 1745 disappointed and dispirited, bequeathing to his children only chaos and confusion,

Died 1745

1. Bhagat Lakshman Singh, p. 148.

and leaving them to make out of it as best as they could.

C—The Punjab under Yahia Khan (1745-47)

Civil war

Shahnawaz's
attacks

Yahia
captured

Peace
destroyed

Of the three sons of Zakariya Khan, Yahiya Khan, the eldest was married to the daughter of the Delhi prime minister, Qamr-ud-din. The *Wazir* was, therefore, naturally anxious that Yahiya Khan should succeed his father as the viceroy of Lahore. Muhammad Shah, the Emperor, however, was against permitting the Punjab to become a stronghold of the Turani party, and seems to have appointed Yahiya Khan as incharge of the government only provisionally. Shahnawaz Khan, faujdar of the Jullundur Doab, and brother of Yahiya Khan, not liking this development, attacked his brother, but finally, peace having been patched up, he withdrew. In the meanwhile, the Delhi *Wazir* continued his efforts, and finally the Emperor did appoint Yahiya Khan, on 3rd January, 1746, as the Deputy Viceroy of the Punjab.¹ Shahnawaz Khan was not, however, reconciled to his position. Assisted by Kaura Mal, Adina Beg and Hashmatullah Khan, he made another effort on 21st November, 1746, to secure division of his father's property, and withdrew only after getting six lakhs of rupees from his father's treasury. But shortly after this, he occupied several districts belonging to his brother, Yahia Khan prepared for another fight, the battle was fought near Lahore, on 17th March, 1747, Yahia was captured, and Shahnawaz became the Viceroy of the Punjab, appointing Kaura Mal as his Diwan in place of Lakhpat Rai.

Meanwhile, during the period of Civil war and strife, which lasted from 1745 to 1747, and during which Yahia Khan remained in charge of the Punjab Government, writes Anandram, the "peace given by the.....rule of Zakariya Khan was destroyed."² The *Raja* of Jammu stopped paying tribute, and revolted against the Lahore authorities. The Jat peasantry of Majha too began to openly defy the authorities and join the Sikhs. Two reasons are given for this, the

1. Anand Ram, *Tazkira-i-Anandram*, p. 289.

2. See *Tazkira-i-Anandram*, pp. 150-151.

first being heavy taxation and second, as according to Prisep, was the maltreatment towards them by military contingents pursuing the Sikhs.

Chhota Ghalughara.

The Sikhs also took this opportunity and reorganised themselves. The purpose of this was to defend themselves more effectively, and also to defend their relatives leading a peaceful life. They also systematized their plunder with a view to gathering political power and territorial acquisitions.¹ Some officials, the *chaudharis* and *mugaddams* etc., who had been taking a more leading part in the execution of the Sikhs, were duly dealt with, and among those who had to pay with their lives, for the acts they had performed in the time of Zakariya were, Rama Randhawa, Sahib Rai, Karma Chhina, Qazi Fazi Ahmad Khan, Harbhagat Niranjaniya, and Khokhar Shamsheer Khan. Some of the towns which were badly plundered by the Sikhs, under the leadership of Kapur Singh, were Batala, Jullundur, Bijwara, Dhag, Manjki and Phagwara. Once the Sikhs entered even the city of Lahore, under the disguise of Mughal soldiers, killed several *muftis* and *qazis*, and escaped after looting several shops.

Sikh
oppor-
tunity

Being tired of these depredations, Yahia Khan, the Viceroy of Lahore, ordered his Dewan, Lakhpat Rai, to deal with the Sikhs strongly. Lakhpat Rai sent some strong detachments, and expelled the Sikhs who had been hiding in the swamps of the Ravi. The Sikhs from here, moved towards Eminabad, and hurriedly visiting the *Gurdwara* Rori Sahib, moved towards the village Budoki. Jaspat Rai, the brother of Lakhpat Rai, and the *faujdar* of Eminabad, according to Ali-ud-din,² received a complaint that the Sikhs had forcibly captured some sheep, and were now cooking their meat. Jaspat Rai sent a message to the Sikhs, that they should vacate the territory immediately. The Sikhs, according to Rattan Singh, replied that he being a Hindu, they had no enmity with him, and that after they had cooked

Lakhpat
Rai
against
Sikhs

Jaspat Rai

1. M'Gregor, i, p. 186 ; Malcolm, p. 89 ; and Gordon, pp. 59-60, 70.

2. *Ibratnama*, p. 230.

Rejected
Sikhs

Was killed

In March,
1746

Lakhpat's
anger

Vengeance

Pre-
parations

and taken their food, they would move away. But to this Jaspat Rai replied that he had been determined rather to destroy their seed, and that there was no question of there being no enmity between him and the Sikhs.¹ As the Sikhs delayed their departure, Jaspat Rai with his soldiers, fell upon them. The Sikhs leaving their un-cooked food where it was, took up the challenge, and during the fight, which ensued, a Rangretta Sikh, named Nibahu Singh, climbing up the tail of the elephant on which Jaspat Rai was riding, administered him a blow with his sword, and severed his head from the body. The head was later handed over by the Sikhs to Bawa Kirpa Ram of Budoki Gosayian, against the payment of five hundred rupees. It hardly needs be added that seeing Jaspat Rai killed, his men fled the field.² This event, according to Karam Singh, took place in March, 1746.³

When the news of his brother's death reached Lakhpat Rai at Lahore, he became mad with anger. He immediately determined to destroy the Sikhs root and branch, and issued orders for general massacre of the Sikhs, wherever found. Prices were fixed on their heads, and several of the innocent Sikhs, in Lahore and in the adjoining territories, were captured and butchered.⁴ A deputation consisting of Dewan Kaura Mal, Kashmiri Mal, Dewan Lachhi Ram, Hari Singh, Dila Ram, Pandit Surta Ram, Des Raj, Surat Singh, and others, including Bhai Prithi, whom Lakhpat Rai considered as his Guru, waited upon Lakhpat Rai, and requested him to desist from shedding innocent blood, but all this had no effect upon him, and the Dewan's policy of relentless persecution of the Sikhs continued. Troops were collected from several places, such as Multan, Bhawalpur, Kasur, Doaba Jullundur and the Hills, big guns were got ready and

1. Rattan Singh, *Prachin Panth Prakash*, p. 375.

2. Khushwakat Rai, *Tarikh-i-Sikhan*, p. 59;
Prachin Panth Prakash, p. 372-75.

3. *Phulwari* of October, 1928.

4. Gian Singh, *Shamsir Khalsa*, Sialkot, 1892 ed. pp. 102-103; Latif, p. 213.

the Dewan and Yahia Khan prepared to march against the general body of the Sikhs, which had taken shelter in the swamps of the Upper Ravi.¹

The plight of the Sikhs here, at this time, was deplorable. They were suffering from a general shortage of provisions and ammunition, many among them were wounded, and the wild game getting scarce, the Sikhs suffered from starvation. Hearing of Lakhpat Rai's relentless order and brutal massacres, several of the booty-lovers among them, cut off their hair and deserted their ranks. All that remained behind was, however, true Khalsa, ready to lay down their lives at the bidding of their leaders, but general lack of provisions among them had made many of them less fit to fight through the situation when the whole governmental machinery had been moved against the Khalsa.

Sikh plight

Lakhpat Rai and Yahia Khan, after making all their preparations attacked them suddenly. The Sikhs retreated and halted on the spurs of Basholi hills on the Ravi between Pathankot and Dalhousie. Here the Sikhs were surrounded, on one side of them lay hills, to the chiefs of which, the orders had been issued not to let the Sikhs escape; on the other side lay the river with a strong current, making it very difficult to cross. On the rest of the two sides, the soldiers of Lakhpat Rai stood ready with their naked swords and guns ready to fire. An attack was made, many were killed, many taken captives, many fell into the Ravi, many jumped into wells to escape tortures if captured, and many shaved their heads and escaped. Of those captured, many were subjected to unspeakable tortures, their hair were pulled, and they were crushed on the wheels. Some of the Sikhs had escaped towards the Beas. After destroying many thousands of them, Lakhpat Rai's thirst for their blood had yet not been quenched, and he pursued them thither. The Sikhs, after crossing the river at Goindwal, which was in spate, tied turbans on their feet, and crossing three miles of very

Sikhs
attacked

Suffered
heavily

1. Khushwaqat Rai, *Tarikh-i-Sikhan*, p. 72.

Entered
Malwa

hot sand, entered the Jullundur Doab, and had just halted near a village to cook their food, when Lakhpat Rai fell upon them once again. Leaving everything there, the Sikhs fled onwards, and crossing the river Sutlej, they entered the Malwa, where the Malwa Sikhs sympathised with them, and they secured a respite.

Chhota
Ghalughara

Total killed

This event, in which the Sikhs suffered such a heavy loss, is known in their history as *Chhota Ghalughara*, or the Smaller Holocaust, which is said to have occurred in the beginning of the hot month of May, 1746. According to Rattan Singh, the total number of the Sikhs destroyed in this holocaust, was about 40,000.¹ But this seems to be an exaggeration. According to Dr. Ganda Singh, between nine and ten thousands were martyred, about ten or eleven thousand Sikhs were lost, while about one thousand of them were captured, brought to Lahore, and beheaded near Ghora Mandi, outside the Delhi gate; the place which began later to be called Shahid Gunj.²

D—The Punjab Under Shahnawaz Khan And the Sikh Respite (1747—48)

Dewan
Kaura Mal,
sympa-
thetic

As we have already studied, Yahya Khan could enjoy the control of the Lahore Government only from 1745 to 1747. In the latter year, he was overthrown by his own brother Shahnawaz Khan, who with the help of Kaura Mal and some other friends, now became the Governor of Lahore, appointing Kaura Mal as his Dewan. Kaura Mal though a Hindu, had a strong sympathy with the Sikhs, and as soon as he came to power, the persecution of the Sikhs was slackened, and Kapur Singh got an opportunity to gather the scattered Sikh energy once again and put their house in order. More so when the Punjab was attacked by Abdali, resulting in a confusion, from which the Sikhs benefited. A short account of the first invasion of Abdali may here be given.

1. *Prachin Panth Prakash*, p. 394.

2. Maharaja Kaura Mal, pp. 25-26 (In Punjabi)

E—The First Invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali

Ahmad Shah Abdali belonged to the Sadozai clan of Afghanistan, and regarding his exact date of birth, not enough is known. The people of his tribe were generally known as Abdalis, or the servants of Ali, as they had formerly embraced the Shia faith, though later on they were converted into the Sunni beliefs. Ahmad Shah was the son of Zaman Khan, and when his elder brother, who was in the service of Nadir Shah, reached a position of eminence, he also secured a job for his younger brother, and Ahmad soon showing a marked personal gallantry, became Nadir Shah's personal slave. After some time, Ahmad was raised to the command of 1,000 men and due to his further faithfulness and honest disposition, when Nadir Shah invaded India, he appointed him the Chief Commander of his personal contingent of 6,000 men. An interesting story is told by some writers, according to whom, when at Delhi, Ahmad happened to meet Asaf Jah, the founder of the Hyderabad State, who possessed the faculty of reading men's faces. He predicted that Ahmad Durrani would become one day a King.¹ It proved to be correct, and soon after, when Nadir Shah was murdered, Ahmad took the opportunity, he collected power and became the king. He is said to have been the first Afghan king, who laid the foundation of the Afghan kingdom in Afghanistan.

Son of
Zaman
Khan

In Nadir's
service

Prediction
at Delhi

Why he
invaded ?

Several reasons have been forwarded which led Ahmad Shah to invade India for the first time. Firstly Ahmad Shah Abdali, also known as Durrani, was an upstart, and immediately after coming to power, he had to divert the attention of the Afghans, lest they fell on him. Moreover the Afghans have always been considered to be a turbulent mass of humanity, they delighted in adventures in the distant lands. Ahmad Shah had raised large armies, maintenance of which was telling heavily on the State exchequer, and the Indian silver and gold were a good inducement which could solve the financial problem.

1. *Tarikh-i-Ali*, p. 121.

Got
invitation

Just when Ahmad Shah himself wanted to invade India as a measure which could solve all his problems, he got an invitation from Shahnawaz Khan, the Governor of Lahore, promising him every help if he invaded. Shahnawaz's capture of power in the Punjab had not been liked by Qamar-ud-din, the Delhi *Wazir*, who wanted to restore Yahiya Khan, his son-in-law, to the Lahore government. The *Wazir* threatened Shahnawaz, who in turn appealed to Ahmad Shah Abdali for help, and invited him to invade India.

From
Shahnawaz

Shahnawaz
changed

But as Ahmad Shah entered India, the *Wazir* prevailed upon Shahnawaz not to be a traitor to his country, and the latter now turned against Durrani. Shahnawaz sent an army against Abdali under the command of Julle Khan Kasuriya, but Kasuriya instead joined Abdali and defeated Shahnawaz's purpose. As Ahmad Shah was marching ahead, Shahnawaz prepared to check him on the Ravi, but failed. Ahmad Shah crossed the Ravi on the 10th and 11th of January, 1748, and started plundering the Mughalpura mohulla of Lahore, while Shahnawaz, leaving the city to its fate, fled on the night of 11th January to Delhi.¹

And fled

Qamar-ud-
din's march

His
mistakes

Buried in romance, the Emperor Muhammad Shah Rangila, came only now to his senses, and sent his *Wazir*, Qamar-ud-din, with two lakh soldiers, to meet Ahmad Shah. The *Wazir* soon reached Sarhind; where in the fort he placed his harem women and his provisions etc ; and now committed some fatal blunders. He did not cross the river Sutlej on the direct route at Ludhiana, but moved instead twenty miles north-west of Sarhind, and he crossed the river at Machhiwara, God knows on what consideration. Besides he failed to understand the necessity of maintaining communication with Sarhind, nor did he post some strong guards at Ludhiana. He made no arrangement for the collection of intelligence regarding the movements of the enemy.

On the other hand, the *Wazir's* enemy was wise. Ahmad

1. Gulam Hussain, *Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin*, iii, pp. 17-18 ; Kahneya Lal, *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, pp. 71-72 ; Ali-ud-din, *Ibratnama*, pp. 233-5 ; Latif, pp. 216-7.

Shah crossed the river unopposed at Ludhiana, occupied and plundered Sarhind. When the Wazir learnt of it, he retraced his steps, and returned to Manupur, about ten miles north-west of Sarhind. Abdali marched about five miles from Sarhind towards his enemy. For some days there occurred some skirmishes between the two opposing armies, till at last, on 10th March, a cannon shot suddenly struck the *Wazir*, and he died. His son, Muin-ul-Mulk, however, took up the command, and placing his father's dead body in a sitting pose, on an elephant, to show his soldiers that he was still alive, he led the attack. The right wing of the attacking army was under the control of Safdar Jung, the left wing under Ishwari Singh, and the centre under Muin himself. Ahmad Shah here showed a strange tactic of war. Ten thousand Durrani horses appeared suddenly, attacked each wing, and then retired, yielding their position to fresh ten thousands. As a result of this, the left wing of Muin's army gave way, and a large number of Rajputs met their death. The centre, however, remaining strong, the Durrani were driven away by the right wing. Just this time, fortunately for Muin, Abdali's store of gunpowder caught fire, as a result of which about one thousand Afghans are said to have been killed, causing a general confusion, and the Durrani fled the battle-field.

At
Manupur

Wazir
killed

Muin
victorious

Such was, however, the callousness of the imperial commanders, that they took no advantage of the enemy's discomfiture, and buried themselves in pleasures and romance. The credit of this victory was given to Muin-ul-mulk, the son of the late *Wazir* Qamar-ud-din, who on the 13th of April, 1748, was appointed the viceroy of Lahore and Multan. He was also granted the title of *Rustam-i-Hind*. Shortly after this, however, the Emperor Muhamad Shah died.¹

No
advantage
taken

Muin
honoured

The Sikhs Re-occupy Amritsar

During this time of confusion and chaos in the Punjab, the Sikhs took full advantage of their position. We have studied how after the execution of Bhai Mani Singh, the Amritsar temple

Sikh
opportunity

1. Sohan Lal, *Umdatut-Twarikh*, i; Khushwakhat Rai, *Tarikh-i-Sikhhan*, pp. 62-3; Bakht Mal, *Khalsanama*, pp. 31-2; Latif, pp. 217-219.

had been placed under the occupation of the Government troops. The first in-charge of this occupation was Qazi Abdul Rehman Khan, and the next was Massa Rangar, both of whom had been dealt by the Khalsa to death. After this several other persons had been appointed to this post, which now, towards the end of 1747, was occupied by a Rajput Muslim, named Salabat Khan. As the opportunity offered itself, as a result of the invasion of Abdali, Kapur Singh called a meeting of the two *Dals*, in which it was decided that Salabat Khan should be attacked. Kapur Singh, who now was getting old, appointed Jussa Singh Ahluwalia as leader of this expedition, and himself accompanied to help him in the task. In the month of March, 1748, just as the battle at Manupur was going on, the Sikhs fell upon the Mughal troops at Amritsar. As Salabat Khan himself came out of his *garhi*, to encourage his soldiers in the fight, Jussa Singh proceeded forwards, and in a moment's time, struck Salabat Khan's head off his body.¹ Salabat's nephew, Nizabat Khan proceeded to attack Jussa Singh, but Kapur Singh dashing to the spot, did the nephew too to death. After this the enemy soldiers fled leaving a large store of their weapons and ammunition of war inside the precincts of the temple, which now fell to the Sikh hands. The temple was repaired, and now a regular Sikh worship started for the first time after several years.²

Sikhs Build the Fort of Ram Rauni

After Amritsar had been occupied by the Sikhs, messages were sent to the scattered *Jathas* of the Sikhs to arrive at Amritsar, to celebrate the *Baisakhi* of 1748. Soon all the *Jathas*, including those of Sham Singh Karor Singhia, Sukha Singh Mari Kamboh, Charat Singh Sukerchakia, Khushal Singh and Hari Singh Bhangi reached, and here it was proposed that the Sikhs must have a fort of their own, wherefrom they should be able to face their enemy, instead of running away to jungles and deserts. The proposal was accepted. The next problem was the choice of the site. After some dis-

1. See Griffin, *Chiefs of the Punjab*, p. 457; Latif, p. 315.

2. See *Ithas Sri Darbar Sahib*, Amritsar, pp. 41-42.

cussions, it was agreed that the small fort should be built in Amritsar itself. There were reasons for this. Amritsar was considered to be *Guru-ki-Kashi*, where every Sikh thought it a privilege to die, which according to him, would carry him to heaven. Moreover Amritsar was the centre of the Majha country, the real home of the Sikhs, and besides, it was surrounded by thick forests of Palas trees, to which in emergency, the Sikhs could retreat. From here they could also watch closely the movements at Lahore. Although the city had a demerit as well, as it lay on the Grand Trunk road, and very near Lahore, wherefrom the enemy forces could march on them easily, its merits over-weighed its demerits, and the construction of the fort was started forthwith.

Construction
started

There was no necessity of calling the aid of any architects and masons etc. Several among the Khalsa knew all these arts, as Rattan Singh Bhangu writes :

Architects
present

ਆਪੇ ਰਾਜ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪ ਮਜ਼ੂਰ ।
ਬਡੇ ਭੁਜੰਗੀ ਦਿਲ ਕੇ ਸੂਰ ॥੧੫॥
ਆਪੇ ਪੀਸੇ ਆਪੇ ਪਕਾਵੈ ।
ਤੇ ਤੇ ਬਡੇ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਕਹਾਵੈ ।
ਜੋਊ ਕਰੇ ਸਿੰਘ ਵੱਡੇ ਕਮ ।
ਧੰਨ ੨ ਕਹੇ ਸਿੰਘ ਤਿਸੇ ਜੰਮ ॥੧੬॥
ਕੋਈ ਕਰੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੀ ਸਰੀਕਾ ।
ਕੋਈ ਨਾ ਸੁਠਾਵੈ ਦੁਖ ਨਿਜ ਜੀ ਕਾ ।
ਕੰਧ ਬਣਾਵੈ ਦੋੜ ਦੋੜ ।
ਜਿਮ ਬੰਦਰ ਪੁਲ ਬੰਧਤ ਧੋੜ ॥੧੭॥

No wonder, it was not long before, the fort, which had the capacity of containing about 500 soldiers, was completed. According to Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, the fort was built in March-April, 1747.² But Dr. Ganda Singh forwards some very potent arguments, which are more acceptable, to prove that it was built in 1748 instead.³ The fort was named as

When built?

1. Rattan Singh, *Prachin Panth Prakash*, pp. 399-400.
2. A history of the Sikhs, i, p. 36.
3. Kora Mal Bahadur, p. 44.

Ram Rauni, after the name of Guru Ram Das.

Dal Khalsa Organised

On the day of *Baisakhi*, in 1748, yet another important development took place. The Sikhs had by this time developed among them, as many as 65 *Jathas* or sections, each under its respective leader,¹ which operated separately, uniting together only very rarely, as in the First Holocaust. There was a possibility of mutual jealousies and differences among them, and unless they were brought together under a common leadership, the Khalsa was bound to scatter to different directions. "Luckily for the Sikhs, a very capable leader who commanded high respect from all the Sikhs and who possessed remarkable power of organisation had appeared among them. This was Jussa Singh Ahluwalia," writes Dr. Gupta, "who had received his training under the famous leader Nawab Kapur Singh. The Nawab was the most venerable Sikh leader. Owing to the constant help and guidance of the Nawab and his own sterling virtues, Jassa Singh Ahluwalia had come to occupy a very prominent position among the Sikh leaders. The Nawab was growing old and he wanted to give the leadership of the warlike Khalsa to somebody else. He had his eye on the promising Jassa Singh and he was on the look-out for an opportunity to do so."²

Baisakhi of
1748

New leader

The opportunity offered itself, and when the entire Khalsa met together on the day of *Baisakhi*, in 1748, the Nawab appealed them for solidarity. His proposal was accepted, under which, all the sixty-five sections were brought together, and re-divided into eleven sections, each under its own leader and with its own title and banner. These eleven sections together, were named as *Dal Khalsa*, the Supreme Command of which, under the appeal of the Nawab, was handed over to Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. The eleven sections

Reorganised

Jussa Singh
appointed

1. See the names of these leaders, Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, i, pp. 49-50.

2. *A History of the Sikhs*, i, p. 51.

or *Jathas* thus organised were : 1. Ahluwalia *Jatha*, under Jussa Singh Ahluwalia ; 2. Bhangi, under Hari Singh Bhangi ; 3. Dallewalia, under Gulab Singh of village Dallewal ; 4. Faizullahpuria or Singhpuria, under Nawab Kapur Singh himself ; 5. Kanheya, under Jai Singh Kanheya ; 6. Karora Singhia, under Karora Singh ; 7. Nakai, under Hira Singh Nakai ; 8. Nishanwala, under Dasaundha Singh ; 9. Ramgarhia, under Nand Singh Sanghaniya ; 10. Shahidi, under Dip Singh ; (11) and Sukerchakia, under Nodh Singh.

Eleven
Jathas

Rules and constitution were drafted for the conduct of their affairs and it was laid down that the entire *Khalsa* of Guru Gobind Singh were the members of the *Dal*, but that none could be admitted into an active service, unless he possessed a horse of his own. Each person had a freedom to join any of the eleven *Jathas*. When all the eleven *Jathas* came together to fight, the body would be known as *Dal Khalsa*, and would be led by Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. The entire *Khalsa* under the eleven sections, would assemble at least twice a year at Amritsar, when the assembly would be called *Sarbat Khalsa*.

Consti-
tution

The *Sarbat Khalsa*, or the entire body was to be the central body, meetings of which would be called by *Akalis* at Amritsar. The *Sarbat Khalsa* was to pass the resolutions, laying down the points of general policy. Another of its duties was the propagation of the Sikh faith. Disobedience to the rules and the constitution of the *Dal*, was to be punished here.

Sarbat
Khalsa

Its
functions

Leader of the *Dal Khalsa* was the head of the Sikh church and State. In each of the sections, its chief was to be supreme, who was to be obeyed by its members, though not beyond the interests of the *Khalsa*. It was the duty of each chief to look after and fulfil the requirements of his followers.

Individual
chiefs

The entire *Dal* was to fight as a body, all the booty which fell to its hands, was to be equitably distributed among the eleven sections, in proportion to their strength. The chief of each section was then to distribute the booty further among his men. When a section carried some exploit itself,

Distri-
bution of
booty

the booty falling into the hands of its chief, was likewise to be distributed by him among his followers.

The organisation of *Dal Khalsa* is a land-mark in the history of the Punjab. Besides giving the Sikhs an efficient organisation, it was destined to clear the way to Sikh political power, as the study of the subsequent chapters will show.

Land-
mark

This also marked almost the end of the career of the great Sikh hero, Nawab Kapur Singh, who though continued to live till the year¹ 1753, retired from the active leadership of the Khalsa, leaving it into the young hands of Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. And before starting the new chapter of this history, which will be marked by the daring deeds of the Ahluwalia Sardar, who led the Khalsa from victory to victory, and ultimately to a Sikh political power, it would be appropriate to have a short review of the activities of the illustrious Nawab, who brought his community from the leaderless state to a glorious future of national integrity and pride.

End of
Kapur's
career

F—Kapur Singh's Estimate

Latif writes about him : "The *Dal* of the *Khalsa*, or the army of the theocracy of Singhs... reached the height of their power under the leadership of Kapur Singh, who really organised this *Dal*.....He was undoubtedly the most distinguished of the Sikh leaders who paved the way for the greatness of the nation as an independent ruling power.....He converted a large number of people, *Jats*, carpenters, weavers, *Jhiwars*, *Chhatris* and others to the persuasion of Govind, and the religious respect in which he was held was so great, that initiation into the *Pahal* of the Guru with his hands was considered a great distinction. He used to pride himself upon having killed 500 Mohammedans with his own hand.....He was certainly the most illustrious and most dreaded of the Sikh sardars before the days of Jassa Singh, Ahluwalia, and Ala Singh of Patiala. Nawab Kapur Singh died at Amritsar in 1753.....He called Jassa Singh to him on his death bed,

An
estimate

Latif's
view

1. Bhai Kahn Singh, *Gur Shabad Ratnakar*, ii, p. 884.

and, making over to him the steel mace¹ of Govind.....hailed him as the future leader of the *Khalsa*, and as his successor to the influence which he exercised over the community of the *Khalsa*."²

A handsome tall and full of vigour personality, there was no part of his body, two inches wide, which did not bear a scar or mark of a wound.³ Kapur Singh was a great organiser, who by organising the Sikhs first into *Budha* and *Taruna Dals*, and then into the great *Dal Khalsa*, brought all the sections together, but for which, the *Khalsa* should have scattered into petty groups, unable to come together and carve out a national glory. As a preacher too, as *Latif* has been referred to above, the Sikhs have much to be obliged to him. It was a privilege to be baptised at his hands, and thousands were the persons who were brought by him into his faith. It was Kapur Singh who brought the Sikhs out from a state of confusion and disorganisation, and under the life of utter poverty and want, gave them new language, in which the most humble articles of use, became the most attractive of the articles of diet. And above all, the greatest service rendered by him to the *Khalsa* at the time was that, although he ruled their destiny in the most effective manner, he did not permit its leadership to become personal and hereditary. He left their command into the most capable hands of *Jussa Singh*, and paved the way for their further glory and greatness.

Handsome
and brave

Organiser *

A
preacher

Language
maker

No
hereditary

-
1. Which he got from *Sundri*, the wife of *Guru Gobind Singh*, and which is still to be seen in the *Akal Bunga* at *Amritsar*.
 2. *History of the Punjab*, pp. 322-323.
 3. *Gian Singh, Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, p. 72.

CHAPTER XXIII

MUIN-UL-MULK, DURRANI AND THE SIKHS 1748—53

Triangular
contest

With the year 1748, a new chapter begins in the history of the Punjab. Prior to this, the contest in the Punjab lay between the two powers, namely the Mughal government, and the Sikhs. With the year 1748, however, the invasions of Ahmad Shah Durrani added one more power, and the contest now became triangular, in which, the Sikhs came out ultimately victorious. In 1748, the Sikh leadership passed into the hands of youthful Ahluwalia Sardar, Jussa Singh; Ahmad Shah led his first invasion of India; and Muin-ul-Mulk, better known as Mir Mannu, became the governor of the Punjab.

A—Against the Sikhs

Muin's
difficulties

When Muin became governor of the Punjab, from April, 1748, after he had secured from Abdali a victory for the Emperor of India, as discussed in the last chapter, there were several problems that he had to face. The civil war which preceded him, had denuded the Lahore treasury, the Durrani invasion had brought in confusion and insecurity, much so, when Shahnawaz Khan, the preceding Governor, had fled to Delhi, leaving the Punjab to her fate. Nor did Muin have a peace on his front towards Delhi. Safdar Jang, the new *Wazir* of Delhi, was determined to ruin the influence of the Turani party, and was the last person to permit Muin to rule the Punjab peacefully.

Challenge
from Sikhs

On the other hand, the most serious challenge came to his authority from the Sikhs. The Sikhs, during the confusion caused by the Durrani invasion, had re-occupied Amritsar; had given to themselves a fort, named Ram Rauni, at

Amritsar; and plundered the Bari and the Rechna Doabs, making themselves masters of considerable territories. The Sikhs also fell upon the retreating Durrani forces, from March 18th to March 26th, 1748, and dispossessed them of much of their valuable possessions. They had given themselves a more efficient and an effective organisation, and their rising power was a serious problem for Mir Mannu to face.

Almost the first thing, therefore, after Mannu became the Governor of the Punjab, was that he prepared to annihilate the Sikhs from the Punjab. Latif writes: "He then stationed detachments of troops in all parts populated by the Sikhs with stringent orders to shave their heads and beards wherever they might be found.....Mir Mannu issued strict orders to the Hill Rajas to seize the Sikhs and send them in iron chains to Lahore. These orders were obeyed and hundreds of Sikhs were brought daily to Lahore and butchered at the Nakhas, or Shahid Ganj, outside the Delhi Gate, in sight of multitudes of spectators. The young Mannu became an irreconcilable foe of the Sikhs and was determined to extirpate the nation."¹

For
annihilation
of Sikhs

At the time of his becoming the Governor, the Sikhs had evacuated the Bari Doab, and entered the Jullundur Doab. Adina Beg the Governor of the Doab, was ordered to march against them, but this man had his own political ambition to fulfil, in which he wanted to use the Sikhs as his tool.² Soon, however, he received strict orders. The Sikhs were attacked, but Adina suffered a terrible loss, though among the Sikhs too, not less than 600 were killed. Adina applied to Lahore for reinforcement, but in the meanwhile, due to rains, the operations had to be suspended, and the Sikhs too, during this period, became peaceful.

Adina
marched

Suffered

Operations
suspended

In the month of October, the Sikhs met for *Dewali* at Amritsar, but lest they should be taken by surprise, they posted five hundred men in the Ram Rauni fort, and some

Ram Rauni

1. Latif, p. 221.

2. See chapter xxvi of this book.

in the neighbouring jungle. The expected soon happened. The fort was surrounded immediately by Adina Beg and Sadik Beg; and Mannu also issued prompt orders to Dewan Kaura Mal, Mirza Aziz Khan Bakhshi, Sarir Ali Khan Jullundri and some Hill chiefs, to take their forces and help Adina. Inside the fort, were only 500 Sikhs, while outside of it many thousands of the enemy stood. The siege continued for four months, but during the period, small groups of Sikhs occasionally sallied out causing a havoc in the enemy ranks. Their number thinned, and they were now left with only 300 men. Before their fight with Adina Beg in the Jullundur Doab, several Sikhs under the leadership of Jussa Singh *Thoka* (Ramgarhia) had joined the services of Adina, as a result of his appeals. Now one night, just as the remaining three hundred Sikhs were preparing for a 'do or die', seeing his brothers in this plight, Thoka deserted Adina, and entered the fort. From inside the fort, Thoka appealed to Kaura Mal, who had at his heart friendly feelings for the Khalsa, to save the Sikhs.

Surrounded

Thoka

Deserted
AdinaOther
develop-
ments

In the meanwhile, some more developments took place. Shahnawaz Khan, encouraged and helped by Safdar Jung, the Delhi *Wazir*, marched on Multan and occupied it, and began to prepare to march on Lahore. On the other hand, the news regarding the second invasion of Abdali, also began to reach Lahore, just when Ram Rauni was under the siege. Under these circumstances, just when a little more effort, should have destroyed the Sikhs inside the fort, Kaura Mal prevailed upon Mannu, to raise the siege, and help the Sikhs with the grants of *Jagirs* rather, to settle them as peaceful citizens of the State. The Mughal forces were thus withdrawn from Amritsar, and preparations started to meet the challenge from Shahnawaz and Durrani.¹

Forces
withdrawn

Under the advice of Kaura Mal on the other hand, the Sikhs were granted 1/4 of the revenue of the *pargana* of Patti. The confiscated revenue of the twelve villages of Guru

Jagir to
Sikhs

1. Khushwakat Rai, *Tarikh-i-Sikhan*, pp. 67-68; Sohan Lal, *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, i, p. 129; *Tarikh-i-Sulatin Afghana*, p. 248.

Chak,¹ was also restored to them, and thus, peace reigned among the Sikhs for some time.

B—The Second Durrani Invasion

The second invasion of the Durrani has been placed between December, 1749, and February, 1750, by Dr. Hari Ram Gupta.² But this does not seem to be correct. According to *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*,³ Durrani invaded the Punjab, just eight or nine months after his first invasion, which means, the second invasion should have fallen towards the end of 1748, or just in the beginning of 1749. This is also supported by *Tarikh-i-Sulatin Afghana*.⁴

The date

Abdali crossed the Indus for the second time, and encamped his soldiers at Kopra. Mannu also marched from this side, and encamped at Sodhara, four miles east of Wazirabad. Abdali addressed Mannu a letter, demanding the assignment of the *parganas* of four Mahals to him, and also claiming the arrears of their revenue since Nadir Shah's invasion of India. The letter was forwarded by Mannu to Delhi, who sought thereby time to make himself ready to meet the invader. In the meanwhile, he also wrote for reinforcement from the centre. What was his surprise, that the Emperor actually granted what the Durrani demanded. Revenue of four Mahals was yielded, and to meet the arrears, Mannu also yielded the revenue of Pasrur, Gujrat, Sialkot and Aurangabad, which amounted to fourteen lakhs of rupees. And thus, after forming an estimate of the strength of Mannu, Durrani retired, to come again some other time.

Letter to
Mannu

Mannu
yielded

If the above given date of Durrani's second invasion, in which, of course, there seems no doubt to us, is to be accepted, Dr. Gupta's claim⁵ that the Sikhs plundered and burnt

1. Khushwakat Rai, p. 68.

2. See Dr. Gupta, History of the Sikhs, i, p. 64.

3. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, i, p. 129.

4. *Twarikh-i-Sulatin Afghana* p. 157.

5. See History of the Sikhs, i, pp. 65-66.

No Lahore

some outer portions of Lahore during the second invasion, would automatically become unacceptable. The Sikhs were yet under siege at Amritsar, which was raised only during the time negotiations with Durrani should have been going on. At this time it would naturally be too much to expect from them an invasion of Lahore. Moreover, after the siege was raised, the Sikhs for some time continued their friendly dealings towards Mannu, and they also rather helped him at certain places, as will be discussed here below, and as Dr. Gupta himself agrees.

Mannu's problems

After the invasion of Abdali Mannu had to face two more problems. Shahnawaz Khan, the ex-Governor of Lahore, was appointed as a result of Safdar Jung's effort as discussed above, as the Governor of Multan, where the former already had a considerable influence, due to his old contacts at the place.

Shahnawaz occupied Multan

Shahnawaz marched his forces and occupied Multan. On the other hand, Nasir Khan, the ex-Governor of Kabul, was also encouraged by Safdar Jang to revolt. Nasir Khan had been expelled from the Governorship of Kabul during the first Durrani invasion, but had been helped by Mannu and made the Governor of the four Mahals. Instigated by Safdar Jang, who is also said to have promised him his confirmation as the Governor of Lahore, if he could defeat Mannu; Nasir Khan collected about eighteen thousand cavalry soldiers, and began to create trouble. He also seduced one thousand of Mannu's soldiers with a promise of higher salaries.

Nasir Khan

Nasir defeated

Kaura Mal against Multan

Deciding to meet first the challenge of Nasir, Mannu marched with Adina Beg, Mir Mehdi Ali Khan, Mohamad Moman Khan, Dewan Kaura Mal, Mir Bhikhari Khan, Razi Beg Khan and Mir Nehmat Khan, and encamped at about seven miles distance from Sialkot. Nasir also proceeded, but in the battle that ensued, he was defeated, and fled towards Delhi.² In September, 1749, Kaura Mal and Mirza Asmat Khan, formerly Dewan and Bakhshi respectively of Shahnawaz Khan, were ordered to march against Multan.

1. History of the Sikhs, i, pp. 68-99.

2. Muhamad Saleh Kudrat, *Tarikh-i-Ali*, pp. 172-3; 102.

In the earlier stages, the Dewan not finding it easy to meet Shahnawaz Khan, with the permission of Mannu, invited Sikh help in the task. The Sikhs having special considerations for Kaura Mal, for his favours towards them, ten thousands of them marched under Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, to the help of the *Dewan*; their expenses, as already agreed upon, having been paid in advance. The battle was fought, in which Shahnawaz was killed, and his head was brought to Lahore where, over-pleased with the services of the *Dewan*, Mannu appointed him as Subordinate-Governor of Multan. It was during this campaign, that pleased with the treatment of the *Dewan*, the Sikhs also began to call him *Mitha Mal*,¹ instead of *Kaura Mal*.²

Sikh help

Thus, for sometime peace continued between Mannu and the Sikhs. But both detested each other, and continued their preparations. Artillery had always been effective against the Sikhs, and Mannu strengthened it during this period. New type of light guns for the purpose, known as *Jizairs*, were manufactured, and 900 gunners were added to the service of the State. The Sikhs also had not been able to reconcile themselves to the changed state of affairs. It is said, when they met together, they condemned themselves for accepting doles from the Government, which they had been determined to destroy. Moreover, *Dal Khalsa* had been organised, but its full advantage had not yet been taken by the Sikhs. But before the Sikhs could plan some exploit against Mannu, his heavy hand fell upon them.

Both
detested

Seeing the rising influence of the Sikhs, and having solved the more serious problems of the State, Mannu ordered once again for the Sikhs to be driven out from towns and villages. The Sikhs moved to the swamps of the Sutlej,

Mannu's
orders
against
Sikhs

1. *Mitha* means sweet, while *Kaura* signifies something bitter to taste.
2. Moh. Saleh Kudrat, *Tarikh Ali*, p. 174; *Tarikh-i-Sulatin Afghana*, pp. 248-9; Kushwakt Rai, pp. 68-9; Ram Jas, *Tarikh Kapurthala*, pp. 143-4; *Prachin Panth Prakash*, pp. 403-6; Latif, p. 315.

Sikh life

Beas and Ravi, unwilling to move away to greater distances, as they wanted to remain near Amritsar, where to have a dip occasionally, and to harass the Nawab. But pursued by Mannu's troops under Mir Amanullah and Mumin Khan, many Sikhs had to retire to the deserts of Malwa and Bikaner, and the forests of the Eastern Punjab. But the Sikhs bore all this with cheerfulness, and many *Jats* rather joined them to escape molestation at the hands of the authorities due to non-payment of heavy taxes. Regarding the life of the Sikhs during this period, writes G. R. C. Williams : his "endurance and rapidity of movement were quite commensurate with his rapacity, enabling him to baffle, if not defy, superior numbersAt a pinch, he could march some twenty or thirty miles a day on no better fare than a little parched gram washed down with pure cold water. A tent he despised, baggage.....he had none.....Besides his weapons his whole kit consisted of horse-gear, a few of the simplest cooking utensils, and two blankets, one for himself, and another for his faithful steed.....in the strife of men contending hand to hand he was terrible, though helpless against good artillery."¹

C—The Third Durrani Invasion

The reason

In 1751, due to some delay in the remittance of the promised revenue to Abdali, the latter sent his agent, Harun Khan to Mir Mannu, but in the meanwhile, he sent two of his generals, namely Abdul Khan and Jahan Khan to Attock, where they started preparing a bridge on the Attock river. Towards the close of November, 1751, Ahmad Shah Abdali himself arrived in Peshawar, and sent a message to Mannu that he should pay him the last three years' arrear of the revenue of four Mahals which amounted to twenty four lakhs of rupees, on the receipt of which he would retire. Mir Mannu, however, sent him nine lakhs, saying that four Mahals had remained under him direct only for one year, for which the revenue was being sent. The rest of two years' revenue had been mis-appropriated by Nasir, who now had

1. Calcutta Review, 1875.

fled to Delhi. Abdali accepted nine lakhs, but still continued his march.

Durrani continued

On this side, Mannu also made his preparations, sent his family to Jammu, and himself crossing the Ravi, at the head of 50,000 horse and foot and 40 guns, took up his position 22 miles above Lahore on the river, at the Shah Daula Bridge. Abdali also had reached the place. Here there were some skirmishes, but one day having a recourse to clever strategem, leaving his camp within Mannu's sight, Abdali cut Mannu's rear and walking a long distance, suddenly reached Lahore and encamping at the *Dera* of Shah Bilawal, began to plunder the surrounding areas. When Mannu heard of it, he hastened back, and entrenched himself under the city. He was besieged, and this continued for four months, during which the Durrani soldiers laid waste the entire country within fifty miles' radius around the city. And this resulted in such scarcity of grain and other things that wheat began to sell at two seers for a rupee, and no house was left with a wherewithal to light even a lamp. Kaura Mal invited Sikh help once again, and Mannu also wrote to them promising rich rewards. Thirty thousand Sikhs marched to their aid, but there were dissensions in their ranks, due to which about ten thousand immediately went back, and the rest too, with ill planned strategy, and lack of proper leadership, failed to give a very good account themselves. We do not hear Jussa Singh himself having come to Mannu's aid.

Mannu's preparations

At Lahore

Sikh help

When the provisions failed, Mannu had ultimately to leave his trenches, resulting in an engagement on the 5th March 1752, in which Kaura Mal, due to the selfish tricks of Adina Beg, was ultimately killed, which caused general desertion, and Mannu was forced to yield himself to Ahmad Shah. This last battle in which Dewan Kaura Mal was killed, was fought near the village Mahmud Buti, on the north-east of Shalimar. Mannu was produced before Ahmad Shah, to whom, in reply to a question, according to some writers, he replied : "If you are a shopkeeper, sell me; if you are a

Adina's treachery

Kaura killed

Mannu
pardoned

Lahore
under
Durrani

Kashmir
occupied

Sikh
oppor-
tunity

Mannu's
orders
again

butcher, kill me; but if you are a king, then grant me your grace and pardon." Impressed by the manly built of this youth, and courageous and such brave heart, the Durrani pardoned him, and conferring on him the title of '*Rustam-i-Hind*,' appointed him in his own behalf, as the Governor of Lahore. A letter was sent to the Emperor of Delhi, Ahmad Shah, asking his approval of the treaty signed between Mannu and the Durrani, which was given, and thus, Lahore and Multan passed into the Durrani Empire. This happened on 13th April, 1752.

After this, the Durrani sent his forces to conquer Kashmir, where the nominee of Delhi was replaced by Sukhjiwan Mal, the nominee of the Durrani, to the governorship of Kashmir, and Ahmad Shah Abdali now retired to his country¹

The Durrani's invasion gave another long sought opportunity to the Sikhs. The whole of the Bari Doab was sacked by them, and the Mohammedan families of note, who had played some part against the Sikhs, were plundered. After this they entered the Jullundur Doab. Adina Beg's absence to Lahore was made a full use of, and the Sikhs plundered the country even as far as Thanesar, across the Sutlej. The Rechna and the Chaj Doabs also could not escape their depredations.

After the retirement of the Durrani, Mannu once again diverted his attention towards the Sikhs, and this time, his retaliation against them was yet more brutal. Prices were laid once again on the heads of the Sikhs and strict orders were passed against giving any refuge to them anywhere. When the Sikhs met for *Baisakhi* at Makhawal, Adina Beg and Sadiq Beg suddenly fell upon them, and many Sikhs were done to death. Mir Mumin was sent to drive out the Sikhs from the Lakhi jungles, but he having failed, another force was sent under the command of Hussain Khan, who was able to engage the Sikhs in an open fight, wherein the latter, due

1. *Prachin Panth Prakash*, pp. 401-11; *Tarikh Ali*, pp. 117-181; *Khush-wakat Rai*, pp. 69-80; *Shamshir Khalsa*, pp. 474-5.

to shortage of supply and unequal numerical strength, were defeated.

Sikhs
defeated

When all the Sikhs could not be drawn out from their hideouts, orders were issued for the capture of their women and children. Hundreds of them were thus collected, and subjected to the unspeakable tortures, great partiality being invariably shown for the young women, whom no stone was left unturned to make a victim of the captors' passion. About three hundred of such women and one hundred children were thus, once captured and imprisoned in a building outside the Delhi gate of Lahore. Here, according to the Sikh chronicles, frantic appeals were made to them by Mannu to accept Islam. But when not one swerved from her determination, Mannu ordered that each one of the women should be given one and a quarter of maund of grains every day to grind, and if any one did not do her work properly, she was to be caned. The children were snatched away from their breasts, and thrown up like balls, to fall upon spears and other sharp weapons. They were cut to pieces before the mothers, and their flesh was thrown into the mothers' laps.¹

Women
and
children

Imprisoned

Hard
labour

Like balls

But such was the iron-spirit of the Sikh women and men, that harder Mannu grew against them, the bolder they became. During this period of brutal persecutions, the membership of *Dal Khalsa* rather increased, and the Sikhs would repeat the following couplet which means that Mannu was their sickle, and the Sikhs his grass blades, the more he cut them, the more they grew in every hamlet and a house :

Sikh
iron-spirit

The
couplet

ਮੀਰ ਮਨੂੰ ਅਸਾਂ ਦੀ ਦਾਤਰੀ,
ਅਸਾਂ ਮੀਰ ਮਨੂੰ ਦੇ ਸੋਏ ।
ਜਿਉਂ ਜਿਉਂ ਮੀਰ ਮਨੂੰ ਵਡਦਾ,
ਘਰੀਂ ਘਰੀਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਹੋਏ ॥

The Sikh persecutions at the hands of Mannu, however, could not continue for a long time, due to his premature death, on 3rd November, 1753, as a result of a riding accident.

Mannu
died, 1753

1. Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash*, pp. 708-25.

Sikh
retribution

And when the Sikhs got the news of his death in their retreats, on 9th November, 1753, a strong Sikh detachment appeared in Lahore. "The Khalsa ladies were rescued and escorted to their homes. The informers, officials and jagirdars who had helped in the arrest of the ladies, were caught hold of, and were all put to the sword The Turks of Pathankot, the Jat informers of Majitha, and Mahant Akil Das of Jandiala, were similarly chastised."¹ And thus the Sikhs paid the miscreants in their own coins.

Why
Mannu
failed ?

Mannu thus completely failed in his policy of annihilating the Sikhs. And there is no doubt that his keeping of a large army for the purpose, was itself a very potent cause leading to his failure. His large army entailed upon him a very heavy expenditure, and to meet this, he had to squeeze the people for taxes. Not few were thus alienated, and only because of this reason, joined the Sikhs, swelling their ranks. Moreover during his time, due to his engagements with Abdali and in some other serious problems, the State failed in giving full protection of law to the people. This was given to the people rather by the Sikhs, who heard complaints against corrupt and ruthless officials and meted out to them due punishments. All this, and the daring spirit of the Sikhs and their rich and valorous tradition, made their faith more attractive, and large number of converts came to join the Khalsa, every day, even in the thick of their troubles.

1. Bhagat Lakshman Singh, *Sikh Martyrs*, p. 176.

CHAPTER XXIV

LAHORE GOVERNORS, DURRANI, AND THE SIKHS

A—Mughlani Begum and Confusion

Immediately after the death of Mir Mannu, the Land of the Five Rivers was thrown into the trough of such a confusion and chaos of conflicting political claims and nagging governmental authorities, the like of which it had never seen before, in the Mughal times. Mannu died in November, 1753, and from that time to April, 1757, as many as ten governors changed hands at Lahore. It resulted in the utter weakness of the authorities in the capital, with the result that every man in the street began to develop his own ambition, and centrifugal tendencies began to have their full play.

Confusion
after
Mannu

Although, as we discussed in the last chapter, the Punjab had been annexed to his own empire, during his third invasion, by Ahmad Shah Abdali, and that Mannu had been appointed to the Governorship of the province only in behalf of the Durrani, the Durrani hold on the province seems to have been very weak, and there was a complete confusion whether the Punjab Governors held their authority from Delhi or from Afghanistan. Thus, after the death of Mannu, Mahmud Khan, the three years old son of Ahmad Shah, the Emperor of Delhi, was appointed by him as the viceroy of Lahore, while Muhammad Amin Khan, Mannu's two years old son was appointed as his deputy. Mother of Amin Khan, Mughlani Begum, an ambitious and one of the most artful ladies ever born in the Punjab; and Mumin Khan, who carried the day to day administration of this province were not, however, satisfied with the mere nomination from Delhi. They, therefore, approached Ahmad Shah Abdali and felt

Delhi or
Afghanis-
tan ?
Child
governors

Mughlani
Begum

Approached
Abdali

Bhikari
Khan's
revolt

Amin
khan died

Mumin
negatived

Mughlani
governor

Sexual
vices

Notorious

themselves secure only when they got the confirmation of their appointment from him as well. The first serious trouble for the new government of the baby viceroy came, when Bhikari Khan one of the most trusted lieutenants of Mannu, revolted against their authority. This seems, however, to have been easily crushed, by the artful winning over of some of Bhikari Khan's own supporters by the Begum. But it was not long before, another serious problem arose. Muhamad Amin Khan died in May 1754, through perhaps the slow effect of poisoning, which was believed to have been done through the machination of Bhikari Khan himself. Mumin Khan, there at approached Alamgir II, the new Emperor of Delhi, to give full powers in his hands and appoint him the Governor, if he really wanted to see the peace established in the country to the favour of Delhi. Almgir granted his request, and appointed him as Governor of the province in October 1754. But such exclusion of Mughlani Begum from the political authority, was not going to be easy. She seems to have enjoyed the full confidence of the nobles of the Punjab, with whose help, she was easily able to negative Mumin's appointment, and became the Governor in her own name and authority.

But Mughlani Begum herself was not going to enjoy this authority for long. Profligacy and sexual vices had so far been a part of the life of the gentlemen of the court, but she was perhaps determined to show that, that was no monopoly of men alone ; and the moment the complete authority came into her hands, she sunk herself completely into the moral decrepitness, which belonged to her office. Her immoral relations with an eunuch, Shahbaz, a page Miskin, and Ghazi Beg Khan Bakshi and others, are notorious in history ; and it is said that eunuchs became so important in her time, that her *Dewan* and *Bakshi* waited outside for an opportunity to see the Begum, while these eunuchs surrounded her inside and acted as her sole mediums of administration. These eunuchs had differences among themselves, and while they vied one with the other

to gain a closer relation with the woman Governor, the nobles of the court watched them in utter helplessness and despondency, while more ambitious among them planned to bring about the Begum's ruin, and occupy the authority themselves.

Nobles
helpless

Qasim Khan, a noble of the court, who was said to have been so close a favourite of the Begum that she considered him to be her son ; was sent by her as the *Faujdar* of Patti. Qasim Khan proceeded thither, but on his way the Sikhs attacked him several times and gave such good account of themselves that, Miskin, a personal attendant of Mannu, and later of the Begum, who accompanied him, wrote : "It was my utter astonishment to see that only three of the Sikh cavaliers drove away the whole Muslim troops."¹ While fighting with such brave men, it occurred to Qasim Khan that, why could not he, recruiting some hundreds of them, march upon Lahore, and then after establishing his authority in the Province, he could attack Delhi, and become an Emperor ?² He recruited 8,000 Sikh soldiers, forthwith. But he failed in managing the things properly. The Sikhs had joined him for their own purpose, and when his treasury was emptied in giving rewards to them, and when the Sikhs were able to secure from him the much needed weapons of war, they began to desert him ; while Qasim's own soldiers, not being paid their salaries regularly, revolted, captured him, and brought him to Lahore, where the Begum put him in a close confinement. This happened about the months of March and April, 1754.

Qasim
Khan's
revolt

Recruited
Sikhs

But
captured

Shortly after this, the Begum fell into yet another strait circumstance. Her nobles had been disgusted with her low moral character, her Turkish soldiery began to betray her for the same reason, and as the Lahore administrative fibre seemed to be breaking on all sides, Khwaja Mirza Khan came to Lahore, and with the help of the Mughlia courtiers captured the power, and putting the Begum behind the bars,

Khwaja
Mirza
Khan

1. See Miskin, *Tazkira-i-Tahmas*, pp. 94-97.

2. Ibid, pp. 95-96.

Mughlani's
appeal

Abdula
Khan's
opportun-
ity

Adina
occupied

Begum
restored

Arrested

Adina
governor

Khwaja
Abdulla
again

Centrifugal
forces

he himself became the viceroy. This happened in December, 1754. But the Begum, who had exhibited her best diplomatic activities only from within the four walls, did not find this challenge too difficult to face. From behind the bars, she sent her maternal uncle, Khwaja Abdula Khan, to Ahmad Shah Abdali for help. The Durrani troops came, and restored the Begum to her former position in April, the next year. Now, however, it was the turn of the Begum's maternal uncle himself to revolt. Finding a good opportunity to fish in the troubled water, he forgot all her obligations to the characterless niece, and putting her in confinement, once again, he declared himself to be the viceroy. Just this time, Adina Beg, the *Faujdar* of the Jullundur Doab, too, was developing his crafty ambition. Finding such tumult and turmoil ruling at Lahore, he marched with strong detachment and occupied the city. Khwaja Abdullah Khan, the Begum's maternal uncle, was driven away, and Adina appointed Sadiq Bag Khan to administer Lahore as his deputy. Soon, however, the Begum found yet another opportunity to send an appeal to Durrani, who this time, sent his General, Jahan Khan, and restored the Begum once again to authority. Khwaja Abdullah Khan was this time appointed as Deputy to the Begum. Delhi, however, could not watch such discouraging developments unconcerned. Imad-ul-Mulk, the wazir of Delhi, came to Lahore, the Begum was arrested and confined once again, and Adina Beg was appointed the Governor of Lahore and Multan, with Jamil-ud-din, as his Deputy, and incharge of the Lahore Government. Soon, yet another change took place. Khwaja Abdulla approached Durrani once again, with whose help he drove away Jamil-ud-din, and himself became the Governor, with Khwaja Mirza as his Deputy. This happened in October, 1756.

Such confused state of affairs at Lahore, encouraged centrifugal forces, as referred to above, and whole of the Province was divided into a sort of petty principalities, the authority of Lahore itself extending only to the immediately adjoining areas such as Shahdara, Eminabad and Cheema

Ghakhar. The Mahals of Sialkot, Gujrat, Aurangabad and Pasrur, came under the independent control of Rustam Khan, owing his allegiance direct to the Durrani. Multan occupied a similar position, and became a separate governorship under Kandhar. Sarhind and Jullundur were under Adina Beg, who recognised neither Delhi, nor Kandhar. Then there were the Tiwanas and Ghakhars in the Sind Sagar Doab, Waraich chiefs in the Chaj, Bajoh Zamindars and Chathhas in the Rechna, Randhawas in Batala, Afghans in Kasur and Alawalpur. Talwan, Kapurthala and Phagwara were held by Rajputs, and Gurdaspur and Jandiala by some Hindu influential saints, who wielded in their territories, both spiritual as well as temporal authorities. Everywhere petty *Zamindars* and officers and turbulent tribes and people clashed with one another. Peace was completely wrecked, and political ambitions ran amuck.

Peace
wrecked

B—Sikh Opportunity and the Rakhi System

Here was yet another long sought after opportunity for the Sikhs, from which they drew full advantage. They helped Adina Beg against Qutab Khan Rohila, and compelled him to grant them a *Jagir* consisting of the Fatahbad parganas. They developed their strongholds in the Upper Bari Doab, repaired Ram Rauni, and strengthened it yet further. They moved about freely punishing the miscreants and helping the helpless. Sarhind was plundered once again, Ambala was sacked; and when they faced a shortage of money and weapons, they tricked Qasim Khan into high hopes of imperial power, and vanished taking away what he possessed in the articles the Sikhs required. The *Faujdar* of Eminabad, Khwaja Mirza, had to face quite a few bad days at the hands of the Sikhs; who also once found an opportunity to enter Lahore in disguise, and put the city to utter plunder, in the time of Mumin Khan's Governorship.

Helped
Adina

Their
exploits

The Rakhi

The most important development during this period was the system of *Rakhi*, which sowed the seeds of Sikh political authority in the Punjab. The circumstances which

Circum-
stances

led to the creation of this system have already been discussed above. When there was complete political confusion at Lahore, Governors changing hands every month; when no body knew whether the Punjab was a part of the Indian Empire, to be guided in its administration from Delhi, or that of the Afghan Empire to be controlled from Kandhar; when the Province was divided into so many petty principalities, or *Zamindaris* and *Jagirs*, everywhere the turbulent tribes aiming at self-independence and political power; the political jurisdictions conflicted, and if some revenue or a tax was paid to one, the other objected, and the poor peasants looked towards heaven, and cursed everybody, who squeezed them of their hard-earned penny, but promised in return only insecurity and lawlessness. There was insecurity everywhere.

Insecurity

Insecurity of honour, insecurity of property, insecurity of life and insecurity of work. Economically, these people were being ruined, and politically they had a hope neither of peace, nor of justice. Roads were unsafe, and trade had come to a dead stop. Such was the state of the things, when it was suggested that the *Dal Khalsa* of the Sikhs being the only well organised body which could promise security, as well as justice, its protection should be extended, where the people required it. This was done, and the *Rakhi* system of the Sikhs began to establish itself in the Punjab.

Dal's protection

Rakhi means protection. The Sikhs went to every village, and whichever of these villages required, to it the protection or *Rakhi* was extended, in return for the payment of one-fifth of income to the Sikhs, two times every year, after each harvest. Under this system, a protection was granted to the people against the exploitation of *Zamindars* and Government officials, against robbers and against the depredations of the Sikhs themselves. Major J. Browne writes:

Rakhi extended

"Whenever a zamindar has agreed to pay this tribute to any Sick (Sikh) chief, that chief not only himself refrains from plundering him, but will protect him from all others; and this protection is by general consent held so far sacred, that even if the grand army (of *Dal Khalsa*) passed through a zamindary where the safeguards of

The system

the lowest Sick chief are stationed, it will not violate them."¹

This protection, or *Rakhi* was extended by individual chiefs of the different units of the *Dal Khalsa*. Sometimes under necessity, two or more chiefs combined together to extend their protection, and there is said to have been stationed a reserve force at Amritsar, which was to be at the beck and call of these chiefs for the purpose.

Reserve
force

Such a protection was the most welcome thing that the people required at the time. Barring perhaps the Sind Saugar Doab, the large territories in all the rest of them were thus taken under protection by the different chiefs, and thus the foundations of the territorial acquisition of the different Sikh Misls were laid down. According to Sohan Lal, thus, Amritsar began to be guarded by Dullewalias and Nishanwalias. Nakka country south of Lahore fell under the protection of the Nakais. Chaj and the Rechna Doab territories came under the protection of Hari Singh Bhangi and Charat Singh Sukerchakia. Some territories north of Amritsar also fell under the *Rakhi* of Jussa Singh Ramgarhia and Jai Singh Kanheya. Southern bank of the Sutlej came under the protection of Dip Singh and Karor Singh; while Ahluwalias and the Singhpurias occupied some territories on both the banks of the Sutlej.²

Welcome

The
foundation

Protections

Establishment of the *Rakhi* system was a development of far reaching consequences in the history of the Punjab. While on the one hand it offered peace, security and justice to the people, and saved them not only from corrupt Government officials and ambitious *Zamindars* and *Jagirdars*, but also from free-booters among the Sikhs themselves, and the doubtful characters of the country; on the other hand it gave to the Sikhs a regular source of income, with which to draw their budget more properly. It also helped in improving

Conse-
quences

1. History of the Origin and Progress of the Sicks in India Tracts, p. vii.
2. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, ii, p. 5.

the character of the individual Sikhs, for now there was no more a necessity of their wreaking their vengeance upon Muslim families, sometimes, merely to fulfil their financial requirements. And last, but not the least, we may say, political power always starts with the extension of military protection, and realisation of land revenue. When both of these things were done by the Sikhs under the *Rakhi* system, unconsciously perhaps, they were laying the foundation of their future political authority, which led ultimately to the establishment of a national monarchy by them under Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

National
monarchy

C—Fourth Invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali

When once again Mughlani Begum found herself in confinement, this time at Delhi, where the Delhi Wazir had taken her, she took one more opportunity of inviting the Durrani, this time writing to him: "Crores worth of cash and goods are buried in my late father-in-law's house, besides large quantities of silver and gold inside the ceilings, which is in my knowledge. There are serious differences among the Emperor Almgir II, his wazirs and nobles, and if you invade India at this time, you will be able to capture the whole Empire of India with all its riches worth crores of rupees, without incurring any expenditure yourself."¹ It was indeed a very good suggestion, which the Durrani accepted without much hesitation. He reached Lahore on 26th November, 1756, and without any opposition, marched on towards Delhi. In the imperial capital too, not a single soldier came out to check his progress. There was a perfect helplessness in the capital, and everybody, from king to the pauper, found himself completely at the mercy of the invader. The plunder of the houses of the nobles now started, in which Mughlani Begum gave the Durrani invaluable assistance, bringing every noble, according to his richness and status, to the notice of the invader. Imad-ul-Mulk, the Delhi Wazir, was relieved of all his belonging, and he was publicly disgraced. Intizam-ud-daula, the ex-wazir, was called in, who handed over to the invader

Invited
by
Mughlani

Good
suggestion

Mughlani's
help at
Delhi

1. Ali-ud-din, *Ibrat Nama* (1854), p. 1146.

everything telling him that nothing now was left on his person, except a ring. But he was threatened for serious consequences if he did not produce more. His face turned white, he revealed that his mother Shulapuri Begum knew where his father had buried the wealth. The lady was called in, and was threatened for iron pins to be pierced underneath her finger nails. She fainted, but when she recovered, she gave out all the secrets of the buried wealth.¹

Wealth
collected

After this Mathura and Brindaban were sacked, no distinction was made between Hindu and a Muslim, and a contemporary writer mentions that for seven days, the water of the Jamna was red, and then it became yellow. At Brindaban, there were heaps of dead bodies, and at one place there lay as many as two hundred dead children, but no body was found with its head.²

Mathura
Brindaban

Des-
truction

Soon, however, nature came to the rescue of the Indian people. Cholera broke out in the ranks of the Durrani, and he was forced to retire. But before he left Delhi, he forced Hazrat Begum, the seventeen years old daughter of Muhammad Shah, into marriage with himself; and married the daughter of Alamgir II to his son Timur. He appointed Imad-ul-Mulk, as the *Wazir* of Delhi, at Mughlani Begum's suggestion, and Najib-ud-daulah was appointed as his plenipotentiary, and Bakshi of the country, who was to possess the real authority of the Government. He annexed the *subah* of Sarhind and appointed Abdul Samad Khan Mohamandzai as its governor.

Nature to
rescue

Marriages

Retired

When Abdali left India, his "own goods were loaded on 28,000 camels, elephants, mules, bullocks and carts, while 200 camel-loads of property were taken by Muhammad Shah's widows who accompanied him, and these too belonged to him. 80,000 horse and foot followed him, each man carrying away spoils. His cavalry returned on foot, loading their booty on their chargers. For securing transport, the Afghan King left

The
plunder

1. See J. N. Sirkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, ii, p. 100.

2. *Indian Antiquary*, 1907, p. 62.

no horse or camel in any one's house, not even a donkey."¹

Sikhs Share the Booty.

At the face of this invasion of Abdali, all that remained of the government authorities at Lahore, was scattered. Sayyid Jamil-ud-din fled to Delhi, but on his way to that place, he was attacked by the Sikhs near Phillaur, where he was dispossessed of almost all that he possessed. Adina Beg had fled to the wastes of Hissar and Hansi, leaving the Jullundur Doab completely at the mercy of the Sikhs to wreak their vengeance upon those who had taken some part against them. The Sikhs spread whole over the country and thoroughly plundered the houses of their enemies at places outside their *Rakhi*.

Nor did they spare Abdali himself on his way back from Delhi. A division of army under Timur, which was transporting immense wealth of Delhi to Lahore, was attacked by Ala Singh at Malerkot, and dispossessed of more than half of the treasures. Rumours were afloat that Timur himself had been captured by this Sardar and put to death, which were, of course, incorrect, and emanated only from the very large measure of success which attended the Sikh exploits. Ahmad Shah himself was similarly dispossessed of a large part of his booty on his way back from Delhi. In his rage, Ahmad Shah bit his arm, and when he reached back Lahore, he sent large expeditions to chastise the Sikhs. A good number of them were captured and put to death. The Sikh temple at Amritsar was razed to the ground, and their sacred tank was filled with refuse. The alliance with Ranjit Dev of Jammu was confirmed, in order to deprive the Sikhs of their hill retreats. And leaving this time, his own eleven years old son Timur, as the Governor of Lahore, with an assistant, Jahan Khan—the Durrani Commander-in-Chief; ten thousand of the Persian troops; and a special army recruited from among the India-born Afghans, Turks and Persians;

1. See H. R. Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, i, pp. 102-103 (Foot Notes).

Ahmad Shah Abdali left for his country.

D—The Fate of Mughlani Begum

Before closing this chapter it would be interesting to have an account of Mughlani Begum's career after the fourth invasion of Ahmad Shah. During his presence in this country, the Durrani was so greatly delighted with the assistance that the Begum rendered him that he once remarked to her : "Hitherto I had styled you my daughter, but from to-day I shall call you my son and give you the title of *Sultan Mirza*." At the Begum's request, the Durrani reinstated Imad-ul Mulk, now the Begum's son-in-law, in the office of the *Wazir* of Delhi ; and granted to the Begum herself, the Jullundur Doab, Jammu and Kashmir as a fief. The Begum made some immediate arrangements for the administration of the territories thus conferred upon her. She invited Adina Beg to take charge of the Jullundur Doab as her deputy, confirmed Raja Ranjit Dev in his possession of Jammu, and appointed Khwajah Ibrahim Khan as the Governor of Kashmir. But before her agents could take charge of the administration of the territories thus conferred upon her, the Durrani changed his mind, and appointed his own son, Timur, as the Governor of the Punjab and incharge of all these territories. To her repeated entreaties that the Durrani should keep his promise, she got the simple reply : "Now that your brother Timur Shah is the Viceroy there what will you do with the provinces ?" And she had to return to Lahore, where she began to live in *Serai Hakim*, once so magnificent, but now in ruins, having only two rooms intact.

Durrani
delighted

Granted a
fief

But
changed
mind

Begum
became
helpless

At Lahore, the Begum had to suffer a very severe maltreatment at the hands of Jahan Khan, the assistant of Timur. Jahan Khan had reappointed Adina Beg as the *faujdar* of the Jullundur Doab, agreeing to his condition that he would be exempted from personal attendance at his court. But shortly after his appointment, Jahan Khan broke the condition, and called Adina to present himself in his court. Adina sent Dilaram, his agent, to Lahore. Dilaram was imprisoned,

Maltreated
by Jahan
Khan

In Adina's
case

and Jahan Khan demanded from Adina the immediate payment of six lakhs of rupees as the tribute. Mughlani Begum approached Jahan Khan, and standing surety for the tribute demanded, secured the release of Adina's agent, but shortly after, taking pity on him, she made him flee from Lahore. This enraged Jahan Khan, who called the Begum to his presence, caught her by the hand and laid on vigorously with a rod, till she offered him her jewels worth the amount of the tribute demanded. Her house was plundered, and she was confined in a small room and subjected to the severe most oppression.

Under
oppression

Under
Adina

Timur and Jahan Khan themselves, however, could not continue ruling the Punjab for long. Soon Adina Beg called the Marathas and the Sikhs to his assistance, and forced these Afghan rulers to flee from the Punjab. The Marathas after their success, appointed Adina as the Governor of Lahore in their own behalf. Adina appointed his son-in-law, Khwajah Mirza Khan, as incharge of the capital, and himself transferred his head-quarters to Batala. The Begum was also removed thither where Adina treated her and her servants with utmost consideration.

Begum
removed to
Batala

Tried to
tempt
Miskin

Tahmas Khan Miskin, a personal attendant of Muin-ul-Mulk, and of Mughlani Begum, his widow after his death, who has left a very valuable account of the life of the Begum during those years, in his *Tazkira-i-Tahmas Miskin*, in Persian, tells us that at Batala, when liberal grants of money were made to the Begum, she once again began to live a life of ease and loose character. She is said by Miskin to have once fallen a victim even to his own robust and handsome bewitching youth, of eighteen years of age. When Miskin resisted her temptations, she imprisoned him and released him only when the matter became known to all, and even Adina sent her a word, against subjecting her devoted servant to such ill-treatment.¹ There may be an exaggeration in Miskin's above referred account, but there can be no doubt that Begum remained a woman of loose character.

But failed

1. See Miskin, pp. 180-1

After the death of Adina Beg on the 15th September, 1758, the Begum removed to Jammu, where Ranjit Dev treated her with every courtesy and consideration. Here she was approached by some disaffected chiefs of Kashmir, to march against Sukh Jiwan, the Governor of the valley; with the promise that she would be helped by them in replacing Sukh Jiwan. The Begum actually made some preparations, but her plans ultimately failed.

After Adina's death, she moved to Jammu

The Begum's sources of income were drying up and when during his next invasion, in April, 1760, Ahmad Shah Abdali learnt how she had been reduced to poverty, he granted her the revenue of Sialkot, which amounted to Rs. 30,000 a year. Early in 1761, the Begum developed an intimacy with Shahbaz, an eunuch. Soon, "in the whole city of Jammu the notoriety of this intimacy was talked about¹," and as the scandal flared up, it became utterly difficult for the Begum to continue living in the city. She, therefore, retired about 30 miles south-east of the city, to Samba, where she married Shahbaz, and began once again to live the life of a regular wife. And thus she continued till her death.

Got revenue of Sialkot

Married Shahbaz, her eunuch

An ambitious woman, who loved power and diplomacy, Mughlani Begum could have proved an effective and an efficient ruler, but for her sexual urge, which "instead of proving a great asset developed into a low passion... Her story," thus writes Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, "is a tale of woe which befell the Panjab and Delhi alike. Born with a silver spoon in her mouth she died a pauper, as the wife of her own household servant."²

Because of her weak character

She died a pauper

1. Miskin, p. 230.

2. Dr. Gupta, *Later Mughal History of the Punjab*, p. 109.

CHAPTER XXV

THE PUNJAB UNDER TIMUR

For complete one year, from May 1757 to May 1758, Timur, the son of Ahmad Shah, remained in the Punjab, to govern it as a province of his father's Empire. During this period, Jahan Khan, his assistant, made every effort to establish peace in the country, and destroy the Sikhs, as he had received strict injunction from Ahmad Shah Abdali. He sent out strong expeditions to hunt out the Sikhs, and thus drove them away to their retreats in the hills and jungles. But ultimately he too had to face a complete failure in his mission, and flee the country along with the Prince, for his life. The circumstances which led to the expulsion of the Afghans, were as usual, the determined opposition of the Sikhs to their rule, in which they were joined by Adina Beg, and also the Marathas who introduced a new element into the politics of the Punjab.

An instance of the Sikh determination and courage may here be given. The temple of the Sikhs, as we have already referred to, had been razed by the Durrani to the ground, and the sacred tank filled with refuse. As the festival of *Diwali* approached, the Sikhs who had taken refuge in Malwa, were inspired by Dip Singh, leader of one of the *jathas* of the *Dal Khalsa*, to emerge and march to Amritsar, to vacate the city of the Afghan occupation, so as to repair the tank, and enjoy the *Diwali* at that place. Soon between five and six thousand of them collected, and reached Taran Tarn, where they put festal ribbons on their wrists, and saffron-sprinkled turbans on their heads, "as if they were out to fight for and win brides for themselves." Jahan Khan being apprised of it, he marched with a strong army, which according to Bhagat

Expeditions
against
Sikhs

Martyrdom
of Dip
Singh

Festal
ribbons

Lakshman Singh, numbered 20,000 soldiers, which seems to be an exaggeration. When Jahan Khan reached the village Golewal, about five miles from Amritsar, the Sikhs attacked him, and gave him a crushing defeat. The Afghan soldiers from here fled to Ramsar, in the city, where they seem to have been re-inforced. Here another battle was fought, in which, Jamal Shah, one of the Commanders of the enemy troops, is said to have challenged Baba Dip Singh for a duel. This being accepted, both fought bravely, till they were fatally wounded. According to the Sikh tradition, a miracle occurred here, when the headless body of Baba Dip Singh went on fighting for some time with the sword in hand. Whatever it be, both the sides suffered here a heavy loss. Some of the important Sikhs who laid down their lives here were, Dharam Singh, Khem Singh, Man Singh, Ram Singh, Sant Singh, Sajjan Singh, Bahadur Singh, Hira Singh and Agarh Singh. At Ramsar, where Dip Singh laid down his life, a monument was raised in his memory¹, and he having met martyrdom for the sake of the Sikh temple, his *jatha*, hence forward, began to be known as *Shahidi² jatha*, and its leadership passed on to Karam Singh. This happened in 1757.

According to Bhagat Lakshman Singh, Jahan Khan himself was killed by a Sikh, named Dayal Singh, at the battle of Golerwal.³ But this seems to be an utterly mis-conceived idea, as it is not borne out by the contemporary writer and an eye witness, Miskin. Moreover, Jahan Khan had to play yet more part in the Punjab history, before he died, as we shall here below study.

Jahan Khan continued his relentless persecutions, and Sodhi Bargbhag Singh of Kartarpur, who was incharge of the Gurdwara Tham Sahib, had to suffer a great deal at the hands of the Pathans. This infuriated the Sikhs, who watched for an opportunity to pay the government in its own coins, and soon the opportunity did offer itself.

At Golewal

Ramsar

A miracle
Dip
martyred

Monument

Wrong
viewBarbhag
Singh
suffered

1. Sikh Martyrs, pp. 195-199.

2. *Shahid* means martyr.

3. Sikh Martyrs, p. 196.

Adina
invited

Condition

Violated

Sikh help

Adina's
refugeContacted
Raghunath
RaoMalhar
Rao
cameSarhind
pillaged

In his efforts to establish peace in the country, Jahan Khan invited Adina Beg, who had now taken shelter at Khali Balwan in the Siwalik hills, to resume his administration of the Jullundur Doab. Being afraid of the secret designs of Jahan Khan, Adina, however, refused this offer. When threatened with punishment, Adina, did ultimately agree to come back, but on the condition that he would be given an exemption from attending the court. Jahan Khan agreed, and Adina returned to the Doab. But soon after this, Adina was asked once again to present himself at Lahore, to which he refused. A strong force was sent under Murad Khan, to chastise him. But Adina, winning over the support of Sodhi Barbhag Singh, and through him that of Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, gave him a crushing defeat at the foot of the hills, on the Beas, where he had retired. But not being confident to meet Jahan Khan himself, he moved on and took refuge in the Nalagarh hills ; while Sarfaraz Khan was appointed by Jahan Khan, as the *Faujdar* of the Jullundur Doab, in Adina's place.

But Adina Beg was not going to remain idle in his hilly retreat. While the Sikhs busied themselves in sacking the Jullundur Doab, and the other territories, including even the suburbs of Lahore ; Adina contacted Raghunath Rao at Delhi, requesting him to march on the Punjab with a promise that the Maratha chief would be paid at the rate of Rs 1,00,000 a day when he was on the march, and Rs. 50,000 a day when he halted at a place. Raghunath Rao accepted the proposal, and despatched Malhar Rao with one division of the Maratha troops to march towards the Punjab. The Sikhs and Adina Beg soon joined him, and the first thing they did was to attack the city of Sarhind. Abdus Samad Khan, the governor of the province of Sarhind, shut himself up in the fort. Sarhind was invested, and soon, Abdus Samad Khan was captured in his effort to flee. After this the cursed city was subjected to utter pillage. The two younger sons of Guru Govind Singh having been executed there, the Sikhs had there own reason to go to the utter extremity of their ruthlessness ; while the Marathas, because of their plundering habit, did not lag behind. Every house was

sacked, and everything, even timber in the roofs, was carried away. This happened in the month of March, 1758.

As the news of this destruction of Sarhind reached Jahan Khan, he prepared with his troops to meet the challenge. He waited for over a month for the Marathas, the Sikhs, and Adina to arrive, and when ultimately he did receive the news of their start towards Lahore, his heart gave way, and he decided to vacate the city, and retire to Afghanistan. He was, however, overtaken by the allies at Sarai Kachi, thirty-six miles north-west of Lahore, but once again escaped under the cover of a dark night. The allied forces pursued him, and when Jahan Khan and Timur had just crossed the Chenab below Wazirabad, they fell upon their soldiers and the entire baggage, which was still on this side of the river. Thus, the fleeing Afghans were easily dispossessed of almost everything valuable, they were carrying. Several of the Afghans were captured alive by the Sikhs, and brought to Amritsar, hands and feet bound. Here they were forced to clear the sacred tank once again, of all the filth and dust which filled it. Adina Beg and the Marathas, however, continued their pursuit of the enemy right upto the Indus, and even across it upto Peshawar.

Jehan
Khan
prepared

But fled

Plundered

Whole of the Punjab was now at the mercy of the Marathas, but they, however, decided not to remain there. The Sikh influence had been steadily developing in this province, and they were now a formidable force to reckon with. Already some quarrel is said to have occurred between the Sikhs and the Marathas, during the course of their plunder of Sarhind. And the Marathas knew perhaps that at the face of this growing power, they could have a promise neither of a regular income nor of perpetual peace. Moreover the terrible heat of the summer, and cold of the winter, in the plains of the Punjab, was not in accord with their temperament and disposition. In the Punjab, they should have been too far away from their home, the poor means of communication making it difficult to keep contact with their source of strength and inspiration. And again, the Marathas

Marathas
not to
stay
in Punjab

Reasons.

were known to be the best plunderers without discrimination. In their lust for wealth, they were said to have spared neither a Hindu nor a Muslim chief of the northern India, with the result that even the men of their own faith distrusted and detested them. And they knew, with the irregular sources of income that the Punjab offered ; dilapidated condition of the Punjab politics and peace ; and the most turbulent mass of people in the Sikhs ; it would be utterly difficult to maintain and support a large Maratha army in the Punjab, which they had to keep if they chose to rule this country, to oppose foreign aggression and to suppress the internal uprisings.

The Marathas, therefore, very wisely decided not to remain in the Punjab. On reaching back at Lahore in the month of April, 1758 ; and after remaining there for a couple of days, they appointed Adina Beg as the Governor of the province, to pay a tribute of Rs. 75 lakhs a year to the Marathas. And thereafter, Ragunath Rao retired towards Delhi. And Adina Beg appointing Sadik Beg Khan to take charge of Sarhind, and his son-in-law, Khwaja Mirza Khan, as incharge of the administration of Lahore, with Adina's brother, Khwaja Sayid Khan to work as his deputy ; Adina himself decided to retire to Batala, which place now, became the real capital of the entire Punjab. And thus started the peaceful reconstruction of this unfortunate land, once again.

Appointed

Adina
governor

CHAPTER XXVI

ADINA BEG AS A GOVERNOR, AND HIS CAREER

Early Career

Before discussing the Government of Lahore under Adina, it would be interesting to have a short study of this man's early career. A man of high ambition and an intriguing nature, who, rising from the most humble position, made the tumult and violent commotion that raged in the Punjab, serve him, and work him up into the highest of the positions in the province, Adina was born at Sharaqpur, on the bank of the Ravi, eighteen miles below Lahore. His father, Chunnu, was an *Arain* by caste, and no record is available of the exact date of his birth. Adina's family faced utter poverty, as he grew from baby to a young boy, and under these circumstances, he was forced to seek an employment with a Mughal officer, as his domestic servant. But this career of a menial, was not going to contain Adina's ambitions for long. Soon he left that job, and enlisted himself in the army, but left that job too, and joined a civil service in the Sultanpur district, as a petty revenue collector in the village Kang. Here, through the support of his influential friend, Lala Sri Niwas, he raised himself up into the incharge of revenue collection, of all the villages within his circle, in only a short time; and later, at the death of the district officer of Sultanpur, a more ambitious idea having come to his mind, he took a bold step, went to Lahore, was able to secure an interview with Zakariya Khan, and impress him with the boldness of his manners. Zakariya took the security of Lala Sri Niwas, Adina's old friend, and appointed Adina as the district officer of Sultanpur.

Born at
Sharaqpur

Domestic
servant

Petty
collector

Raised

District
officer

Sultanpur
sacked

Reconst-
ructed

Governor
of Doab

Soon after, when Nadir Shah invaded India, he passed through Sultanpur on his way from Lahore to Delhi, and sacked it along with the adjoining territories. After Nadir retired to his country, Adina employed himself to the task of the reconstruction of his district with such zeal and energy, that within a short time the life of his people became normal, and they busied themselves into their peaceful pursuits of life once again. It was a wonder, which Adina achieved in a short time. The Jullundur Doab, within which the district of Sultanpur lay, had been the worst victim of the Sikh desperados. And when the question of the reconstruction of the whole Doab, greater portion of the population of which consisted of *Jats* having sympathetic attitude towards the Sikhs, arose, the choice naturally fell upon Adina. Adina Beg was thus appointed in the high position of the *Nazim*, or Governor, of the Doab, and was charged with the duty of chastising the Sikhs.

Intrigued
with Sikhs

Sikh
freedom

As a *Nazim* too, Adina was not a less success. Peace was established in the Doab within a short time, but the Sikhs continued still, their activities, though with a lesser vigour. The reason for this is said to be the fact that this time it was not an administrator, as much as a diplomat which was at work in Adina. Adina Beg had a definite plan up his sleeves. As J. Browne writes : "The force he had with him was fully equal to the execution of that service, but Adina Beg, considering that if he should entirely put an end to all disturbances in that district, there would remain no necessity for continuing him in so extensive a command, carried on intrigues with the chiefs of the Sicks (Sikhs), and secretly encouraged them to continue their depredations, at the same time pretending to be very desirous of subduing them. From this management the Sicks became daily more powerful and seized upon several places in distant parts of the *Subah* of Lahore. They also began to perform public pilgrimages to the Holy Tank at Amrutsur without molestation." Soon, however, Adina received strict orders from Zakariya Khan,

the Khan Bahadur, to chastise the Sikhs and drive them away. Adina prepared for the purpose. First he tried to approach the Sikhs peacefully, asking them to accept Government services, and settle as peaceful citizens. He seems to have proved a perfect success in his diplomacy. Although the entire mass of the Sikhs could not be persuaded to settle in peace, a few among them, such as Jussa Singh Thoka,¹ he was able to seduce, with the result that thus dismayed, the Sikhs vacated the Jullundur Doab, and moved into the Malwa territories.

Thoka
in his
service

Soon after, however, Adina himself fell into a strait circumstance. His revenues to Lahore having fallen into arrear and his efforts to justify it by forwarding Sikh depredations and destruction at the hands of Nadir as a reason, having failed, he was arrested and put in a confinement; Zakariya's younger son, Shahnawaz Khan, being appointed as the Governor of the Doab. Soon, however, peace between Zakariya and Adina was patched up, through the efforts of Dewan Lakhpat Rai, and Adina was appointed now to work under Shahnawaz Khan, as a Deputy Governor. It was not long before he was able to win the complete confidence of Shahnawaz, and the entire administration of the Doab fell to his control.

Revenue
arrears

Confined

Restored

After the death of Zakariya Khan, in 1745, as we have already discussed, a war of succession started between his sons. His eldest son, Yahia Khan, being the son-in-law of Qamr-ud-din, the Delhi *Wazir*; succeeded in becoming the Governor of the Punjab; but the younger son Shahnawaz Khan, not being contented with the Governorship of the Doab alone, was determined to create difficulties. Adina played his part cautiously, keeping the confidence of his immediate master, yet giving no cause to Yahia Khan to suspect his loyalty. Ultimately, however, when he saw the forces in favour of Shahnawaz Khan going strong, he openly sided with him. He led an attack against Shahnawaz's enemy at Lahore, in March, 1747, and won him a victory. Yahia was captured, and now

Helped
Shanawaz
Khan

1. Later on known as Ramgarhia.

Shah Nawaz Khan became the Governor of Lahore, who gave complete charge of the government of the Doab to Adina.

Advised
for
Durrani
invitation

His
diplomacy

Joined
Wazir

Under
Mannu

Faujdar
again

Policy
against
Sikhs

The
battle

But, as the Delhi *Wazir* was utterly dissatisfied at these developments at Lahore, he threatened Shah Nawaz Khan for the consequences of his forcible capture of power. It was Adina who is said to have advised his master at this critical juncture, to contact Ahmad Shah Abdali forthwith, with the proposal of the 'Kingship for the Durrani, and *Wazirat* for Shah Nawaz Khan.' In the meanwhile, however, he showed no compunction in trying to stab his master at the back. He secretly informed the Delhi authorities of the impending designs of Shah Nawaz. As the Durrani entered the Punjab, the Delhi *Wazir* approached Shah Nawaz in the name of the honour of his family, and held out before him bright future prospects, if he dissociated himself from the Durrani. Shah Nawaz gave in and prepared to give a battle to the Durrani at Lahore. He was, however, defeated, and fled together with Adina, to Delhi. As the Durrani marched against Delhi after his stay of about a month at Lahore, Adina joined his forces with Qamr-ud-din, the Delhi *Wazir*. And when the *Wazir* was killed in a battle with the Durrani at Manupur, in March, 1748, Adina remained very close to his son, Muin-ul-Mulk. Muin defeated the Durrani, and was after this, appointed as the Governor of Lahore.

Adina had already carved out for himself a place in the heart of Muin, better known as Mir Mannu. And when the latter became the Governor of Lahore, he confirmed Adina in his *faujdar*i of the Jullunder Doab, with the strict orders that he should destroy the power of the turbulent Sikhs. But once secure in his control of the Doab, Adina was determined to revive once again, his old ambitious plans, which he felt could be best realised only through the help of the Sikhs. While outwardly, he tried to give the Sikhs a crushing blow, inwardly he had a plan to exploit the Sikh power to his favour. It was with this double mindedness, that he gave a battle to the Sikhs, in which although the Sikhs did loose as

many as 600 men, the loss he suffered was much heavy. After this, he asked for a reinforcement from Lahore, but in the meanwhile, the rainy season having commenced, his operations against the Sikhs were suspended.

Shortly afterwards, however, he seems to have become more serious in his attitude against the Sikhs, for the time. And when, after the rainy season was over, and in the month of October, the Sikhs assembled at Amritsar, putting their five hundred picked men in the Ram Rauni, and began to celebrate their festival, Mannu ordered Adina to march against them. The Sikhs, however, had taken their precaution, and many hid themselves in the jungles nearby, as five hundred of them remained in the Ram Rauni. The fort was invested by Adina. As the time passed, the Sikhs occasionally sallied out and created a havoc in Adina's ranks. But they themselves lost about two hundred companions, and just when the rest of the three hundred found themselves in hopeless plight, and were preparing to march out in a 'do or die' bid, Jussa Singh Thoka, who had taken service under Adina, deserted him and joined the Sikhs in the fort. From there he wrote to Dewan Kaura Mal, who had a very favourable inclination towards the Sikhs, to make his effort with Zakariya, and try to save the three hundred lives. To the utter chagrin of Adina, Kaura Mal was able to prevail upon Zakariya, who granted one-fourth of the revenue of the *pargana* of Patti ; to the Sikhs, to settle them as peaceful citizens, and ordered to raise the siege. Forster writes : "It is supposed that their force would then have been annihilated : had not this people found a strenuous advocate in his minister Kauramal, who was himself of the Khulasah sect and diverted Meer Muunoo from reaping the full fruits of the superiority he had gained."¹

This was a bitter blow to the self-respect of Adina, who found in Kaura Mal, more than his equal in diplomacy, and decided to seek an opportunity to destroy him. The opportu-

More
serious

Besieged
Ram
Rauni

Thoka
deserted
him

Siege
raised

Bitter
blow
to Adina

1. A journey from Bengal to England, i, p. 431.

Adina
against
Kaura
Mal

nity did offer itself soon. Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded the Punjab for the third time in 1751. On every occasion, Adina countered the sensible advice of Kaura Mal, to Mannu, and thus hastened the ruin, not only of the *Dewan*, but of Mannu as well. In the battle of Mahmud Buti, near Lahore, when Kaura Mal faced the enemy, and the entire fortune of Mannu depended upon his failure or a success; Adina advised Mannu to call the *Dewan* back together with a detachment of his troops, so that a joint attack might be made on the enemy. Kaura Mal, however, refused to leave his position with the argument that if he did so, it would be considered as a sign of retreat by the enemy, and the entire mass of his soldiers would thus be massacred. Mannu, however, at Adina's advice, insisted and sent strict orders for the *Dewan* to come. As the *Dewan* left his position, the expected happened. The enemy immediately opened an attack, there was a complete confusion in Kaura Mal's ranks, and he turned to restore order among his men. Encouraged by Kaura Mal's presence, his soldiers gave a determined fight to the enemy, and began to push them back. As this process started, by an accident, Kaura Mal's elephant fell on ground. Adina was watching all this development, and not only he prevented any aid from reaching the *Dewan*; when the latter fell down from his elephant and was just trying to mount that of Mir Nehmat Khan, Adina gave a signal to Bazid Khan Kasuria, who fired at the *Dewan*, and the *Dewan* with the very first shot, fell down dead. Just this time, a Durrani marched forwards and cutting off the *Dewan's* head, carried it away.¹ After this, Mannu could continue to fight only for a short time, was ultimately defeated, and captured.

Adina
got
Kaura
fired at

Mannu
pardoned

Mannu
against
Sikhs

Mannu was, however, pardoned by the Durrani, who confirmed him as the Governor of Lahore, in his own behalf. Shortly after, when the Durrani retired, and the peace was re-established, Mannu charged Adina once again to proceed against the Sikhs, who had subjected the Jullundur Doab to an utter plunder. Adina proceeded in conjunction with

1. *Ahwal-i-Adina Beg Khan*, Anonymous.

Sadik Beg Khan, and to clear himself of the suspicion of treachery in the battle of Mahmud Buti, he suddenly fell upon the Sikhs, who had assembled for *Baisakhi* at Makhawal. It was a surprise attack, in which a good number of the Sikhs were easily done to death. But writes Malcolm : Adina was an artful chief, who "considered this turbulent tribe in no other light than as the means of his personal advancement. He was careful not to reduce them altogether, but, after defeating them in an action which was fought near Makhawal, he entered into a secret understanding with them, by which, though their excursions were limited, they enjoyed a security to which they had been unaccustomed, and from which they gathered strength and resources for future efforts."¹

Secret
under-
standing

During the confusion that followed after the death of Mir Mannu in November, 1753 ; and when peace was completely wrecked at Lahore, where Governors changed hands one after the other and the rivals clashed ; Adina Beg took full advantage of his position, and established his independence, owing his allegiance neither to Delhi nor to Kandhar. When everywhere in the Punjab, nothing but chaos ruled supreme, the Jullundur Doab under Adina, enjoyed peace of a settled government. Adina strengthened himself to such an extent that, when Qutb Khan Rohilla revolted against Delhi, and after defeating the imperial force at Karnal, ravaged the entire province of Sarhind, and the baffled *Wazir* of Delhi knew not what to do ; Adina gathering the Sikh help, and the help of all the *Zamindars* of his territories and other men of means, prepared about one lakh soldiers, horse and foot, and gave such a crushing defeat to Qutb near Rupar, that almost all his important chiefs, including himself, lost their lives, and their soldiers precipitatedly fled the battle-field. Adina thereafter received the title of '*Zafar Jang Bahadur*', and Sarhind and its dependencies too were added under his administration.

After
Mannu

Adina
streng-
thened

Qutb
defeated

Received
title

1. Sketch of the Sikhs, p. 92.

Marched
on Lahore

Foiled

Defeated
by Jussa

Adina was, thus, moving fast towards the height of his glory and fame. After he had attained to the joint Governorship of the Jullundur Doab, and Sarhind, he decided to take advantage of the confusion reigning at Lahore. He marched upon the city, expelled its Governor, Abdullah, and appointed Sadik Beg Khan as his deputy, to take charge of its administration. He was, however, soon foiled in his designs by Mughlani Begum, who appealed to the Durrani for help, whose forces came, Sadik fled, and the Begum was restored to the Governorship of Lahore. Just this time, Adina suffered yet another reverse, when in November, 1755, Jussa Singh Ahluwalia gave him a decided defeat at Kaddur, and wrested from him Fatahabad.

Helped
Imad-ul-
Mulk

Adina
governor

Adina was not, however, discouraged. He was confident of having more opportunities for the realisation of his highest ambition. And one such opportunity offered itself immediately. The Delhi Wazir, Imad-ul-Mulk, desired to deceive Adina, and occupy Lahore. Adina sensed his design and offered to help him. The Wazir came to Lahore, married Umda Begum, the daughter of Mughlani to himself, carried Mughlani herself forcibly to Delhi; appointing Adina as the Governor of Lahore and Multan, in return for a tribute of Rs. 30 lakhs a year.

Short-
lived

But Adina's Governorship of Lahore, again, was only short lived. Khwajah Abdullah Khan brought a military help from the Durrani, Sayyid Jamil-ud-din, Adina's assistant, and incharge of the Lahore administration fled the city, and the Khwajah himself became the Governor.

Durrani
came

Adina
left

At the invitation of Mughlani Begum from Delhi, Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India once again in November, 1756. Adina, together with Sadik Beg, fled to the waterless lands of Hissar, and later to Khali Balwan in the Siwalik hills. After sacking Delhi, Mathura and Brindaban, before the Durrani retired to his country, he put Jammu and Kashmir, and the Jullundur Doab under the control of Mughlani Begum; and put the *Subah* of Lahore under the

Governorship of his son Timur. Mughlani Begum invited Adina to take charge of the Doab under her. But at the same time, claiming that the entire country upto the province of Sarhind, had been conferred by the Durrani on his son Timur ; Jahan Khan, the Lahore *Wazir*, invited Adina in his own behalf to take the charge of the administration of the Doab. Adina, however distrusted the Afghans, and refused the offer. Later when he was threatened, as we have discussed in the last chapter, he resumed the administration on the condition that it would not be obligatory upon him to attend the Lahore court. The peace between the Afghans, and Adina, however, could not continue for a long time, and inviting the help of the Sikhs and the Marathas, he expelled the Afghans from the Punjab, and resumed the Governorship of Lahore in return for the payment of Rs. 75 lakhs a year to the Marathas.¹

Invited by
Mughlani

By Timur

Returned

Afghans
expelled

Adina, the Punjab Governor under Marathas

After assuming complete control of the administration of Lahore, in April, 1758, Adina busied himself immediately in restoring law and order in the country. A very large sum of seventy-five lakh rupees had to be paid to the Marathas every year. And besides, the administrative expenses of the country, and the reconstruction of the ravaged areas, too, were to involve a considerable expense to the State. Adina was all powerful, having nothing to fear from the weak Government of Delhi, and having the strong power of the Marathas to rely upon in case of a foreign aggression. He therefore employed himself to the task of reconstruction of the country, and restoration of confidence among the people with vigour. Merchants had to be encouraged to resume their trade and business, and the agriculturists to employ themselves on land, so that they should flourish and pay revenue to the Government. But here, the greatest problem for Adina was to remove the danger of the Sikh desperados, to encourage such activities. He, therefore, contacted them, and advised them to settle in peace. But the

Restoration
of peace

1. See the last chapter.

Sikhs rejected his advice

Sikhs had their own ambitions to realise, and Adina was bound to face a determined resistance on this front.

Force against Sikhs

Adina decided to crush the Sikhs into subjection, and began to raise a large army for the purpose. Orders were issued to all the important *Zamindars* and chiefs to assist the Government in this respect, and a great many of them did come forward, all with the determination to annihilate the Khalsa. A good number of the Sikhs collected near Adina-nagar to overawe the Government. A strong force was despatched under Guru Aqil Das Jandialia and *Dewan Hira Mal* to meet them. The Sikhs retired to Qadian, where a battle was fought, in which, the enemies of the Sikhs were utterly routed. The *Dewan* lost his life, and his soldiers precipitately fled.

Sikh victory

Adina's new measures

Adina was utterly shocked. Strict orders were issued to the *Zamindars* and the chiefs of the Punjab to take measures for driving out the Sikhs. They were made to take oaths to show no consideration towards them. Preparations were made and a large number of carpenters and others collected with their sharp weapons to clear away the jungles which served as places of refuge for the Sikhs. But the Sikhs rather grew bolder, and a good number of them collected under the leadership of Nand Singh Sanghania to have a dip in the sacred tank at Amritsar. They also included among them the important Sardars, such as Jai Singh Kanheya. Mir Aziz was sent by Adina against them. The Sikhs shut themselves up in the Ram Rauni fort, which was closely besieged by the Mir. The Sikhs led sorties and inflicted serious losses on the enemy. But the Mir was as much determined as the Sikhs within, and ultimately he succeeded in impinging a large hole in a wall of the fort. The Sikhs dashed out in small numbers, and fell upon the enemy. Many lost their lives, many got arrested, and the rest escaped. The Sikhs retired to the Malwa country, where Sadik Beg Khan, the Governor of Sarhind, fell upon them near the village Sanghulan. Here, although Sadik himself suffered a serious loss, the Sikhs were ultimately defeated and forced to flee.

Ram Rauni besieged

Sikhs in Malwa

Defeated

As Adina's preparations to annihilate the Khalsa went apace, fortunately for them, he suddenly fell ill, and passed away from this mortal world at Batala, on the fifteenth day of September, 1758. And thus, one more Governor of Lahore died, ending his fruitless efforts to destroy the seed of the Khalsa.

Died, 1758

An Estimate

Adina left behind him an administration better consolidated, but the poor of the Majha, poorer yet. Import of the food grains from Malwa into that part of the country, had been stopped by Adina, as the local supply failed due to the failure of the monsoons during that year. Adina supposed that under these conditions the Sikhs would be forced to leave that Doab out of starvation. But he, in this, had completely misjudged the Sikh capacity. As the prices rose, the poor of the land were the hardest hit. They were forced to migrate, thus destroying the country's economy, while the Sikhs gathered strength and won their sympathies.

Consolidated and poor

Prices rose

Adina certainly was a better administrator, who consolidated the Lahore administration, and brought all the chiefs and the zamindars of the State under his complete subjection. But he utterly failed to destroy the Sikhs, or to tame them into peaceful citizens. Had he lived a few years more, he should have died only a miserable death, as some of his predecessors did. Ahmad Shah Abdali was preparing to march into the Punjab and teach Adina a lesson for his crafty success. The Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh was determined to destroy the self-seeking rule of the Mughals, which was completely oblivious of the right of the non-Muslims to an honourable and respectable citizenship. Adina was lucky that he died before his fortunes declined.

Failed against Sikhs

Adina lucky

One of the most deceitful and crafty characters, who never passed a day when he did not plan to cheat a friend and be a traitor to his salt ; who in his self seeking designs, had no compunction, in advising Shahnawaz Khan to invite the Durrani and secretly reporting against him to Delhi for his impending designs ; in inviting Marathas against Prince

Deceitful

Timur and writing to him secretly that he was joining the Maratha invaders only as a matter of policy and not out of any conviction ; in eating Mir Mannu's salt and secretly designing to destroy his Dewan, Kaura Mal, and bringing about his defeat against Ahmad Shah Abdali ; and in contracting the Sikh friendship and turning against them when they had served his purpose ; Adina was certainly one of those men who in order to get some material gains, seek a guidance neither from some high principle of a truthful life, nor from a dogma of conscientiousness. Still however, when all this is said, Adina was a wise diplomat, who knew where his benefit lay, and never failed in carving out the way towards that gain. Born in a humble family, and starting his career as a domestic servant, Adina's rise to the highest of the positions in the Province, was indeed a proof of his foresightedness, boldness, and wisdom. The way he combined threats and favours, and gifts and chastisements together to achieve his end, it proved him to be possessed of a brain only of a best chemist, who knows how and in what proportion to bring the different chemicals together to produce the most desirable results.

Adina ruled only for a short period of five months, but during this period he succeeded in establishing a large measure of law and order where only chaos ruled supreme. He maintained a large army to meet foreign aggression and to establish internal peace. But when his revenues seemed to be failing him, and he found it difficult to bear the large expenditure on it, he hit upon a wise plan which had never occurred to anybody before. Quoting *Ahwal-i-Adina Beg Khan*, in this respect, Dr. Gupta writes how Adina divided his army into two sections. He retained the services of the one, while of the other half were disbanded. After the expiry of six months, the first half was permitted to go home and the second half was kept on active service. In this manner, Adina was able to cut down his military expenditure by fifty per cent.¹

1. Later Mughal History of the Punjab, p. 106.

Ahwal-i-Adina Beg Khan gives an interesting anecdote, as quoted again by Dr. Gupta. Adina was always hard of money. Once he learnt that in the hills under his jurisdiction, there lived a rich *Gosain* physician. Feigning illness, he called the physician to his camp. But when after feeling Adina's pulse, the physician could find nothing wrong with his system, the Governor told him that the worst malady from which he suffered was the shortage of money. And the physician could secure his release only after paying to Adina two cups full of the gold coins.

How he
collected
money

CHAPTER XXVII

MARATHA EXCLUSION AND THE SIKH RISE

A—After Adina

After the death of Adina Beg, the Punjab fell once again into a state of confusion and chaos. Khwajah Mirza Khan tried to handle the administration, but he utterly failed. Imad-ul-Mulk, the *Wazir* of Delhi, despatched Sayyid Jamil-ud-din Khan and Abaidullah Khan Kashmiri, perhaps to take charge of the Lahore Administration. But these two gentlemen had hardly reached Sonipat, when Antaji Manakeshwar, sent by Rughunath, reached Delhi, and they retraced their steps. Dattaji Sindhia was despatched by the Peshwa, to take charge of the Punjab administration. But he after reaching the Sutlej, lost his heart, and afraid of the Sikhs, returned to Delhi ; sending Sabaji Sindhia instead, to Lahore.

Sabaji was a man of sweet nature and a commanding genius. He reached Lahore with a very large Maratha army, and almost the first thing he did was to contact the Sikhs and win their friendship, with the result, that shortly after when Jahan Khan marched from Peshawar with a strong Afghan army to occupy the Punjab, the Sikhs joined their forces with Sabaji and gave a crushing defeat to the Afghans ; killing Jahan Khan's son and wounding him as well. For a short time at least, Sabaji succeeded in establishing peace in the Punjab.

As the anarchy prevailed at Lahore, before Sabaji's arrival, the Sikhs made best out of the opportunity which offered itself. They spread themselves whole over the country, and extended their *Rakhi* far and wide. They met Bishambar Das, the Dewan of Adina; at Urmur Tanda, killed him in the battle and dispersed his 25,000 soldiers

after inflicting a heavy loss on them. They conquered the territories for the first time, and parcelled them out among the chiefs of the different *Jathas* equitably. The different chiefs and the *Zamindars* of the Punjab hastened to offer their submission, and accept their *Rakhi*. And when Sabaji came, he also found his security only in establishing friendship with the Sikhs. Those who came under the Sikh protection, the Sikhs kept their faith with them, and scrupulously restrained themselves from violating their private property, and kept their promises to protect them without distinction from any attack from outside.

Sikh *Rakhi*

Sabaji, however, was not destined to enjoy the Governorship of Lahore for long. A defeat at the hands of the Sikhs and the Marathas, only strengthened Jahan Khan's resolve to occupy Lahore for his master's son, Timur. Shortly after, therefore, he marched once again into the Punjab, with a much larger force than before. It was a critical time for which, his troops in the Punjab being scattered, Sabaji was not prepared. He remained at Batala, and without firing a single shot, Jahan Khan reached Wazirabad. The Marathas fled the country leaving it to its fate. Sadiq Beg Khan, the son of Adina, also fled with his mother to Delhi.

Jahan
againMarathas
fled

B—Fifth Invasion of the Durrani

Ahmad Shah Durrani himself reached Lahore at the head of a very large force, in October, 1759. When all deserted the Punjab in an utterly disgraceful haste to save their lives, the Sikhs came forward, and the Durrani had to loose as many as about two thousand men during the course of his marches in the Punjab.

Sikhs
forward

Abdali appointed Jarchi Karim Dad Khan as incharge of Lahore. And appointing Raja Ghumand Chand of Kangra as the Governor of the Jullundur Doab, Abdali crossed the Sutlej. It was only at Taraori that the Marathas tried to arrest his march, but here they were utterly routed, and leaving their 400 killed, they fled the battle-field on the 24th of December. Abdali reached near Delhi, where some

Jarchi
Karim at
Lahore

Taraori

Rohilla chiefs joined him. He continued his march against the Marathas. Datta Ji Sindhia met him at Barari Ghat on the Jumna, but was slain and his soldiers fled. At Sikandarabad, Malhar Holkar met him on the 4th March, 1760 but was defeated. Abdali now occupied Delhi, and then left it and reached Anup Shahar, on the border of Oudh. Shuja-ud-daulah of Oudh joined the Durrani with his forty thousand horse and foot, and Abdali now awaited a Maratha force from Puna.

The Third Battle of Panipat

As the news of the repeated Maratha disasters reached at Puna, a very large force of the Marathas was prepared by the Peshwa, and sent under the command of Sadashiv Bhau, a youth of only 30 summers, to re-establish the Maratha hold on the north. Bhau marched on Delhi, and the city fell before him on the 22nd of July. Rejecting all reasonable offers of peace, in a fit of his youthful frenzy, Bhau marched towards the north to meet the Durrani. But the Durrani suddenly took advantage of Bhau's blunder of not putting the fords of the Jamna under proper guards, crossed the river and reached Panipat. Bhau also retraced his steps and reached Panipat.

The two armies encamped before each other at a short distance. The troops under Bhau, according to Latif, "numbered 3,00,000 men, including the cavalry in their regular pay, which numbered 55,000, predatory horse, regular infantry, and the contingents from the allied states. They had also three hundred pieces of cannon. The troops under the Abdali consisted of 40,000 Afghans and Persians, 13,000 Indian cavalry and 38,000 Indian infantry, with about 70 pieces of cannon borrowed from Indian allies."¹

Here both the sides tried to cut off the supplies of each other. About 12,000 Marathas under Govind Rao Bundela, spread themselves over the country, and blocked almost all the Afghan lines of supplies. The utter want of supplies

1. Latif, p. 236.

was just beginning to tell upon the Afghans, when Atai Khan Popalzie, suddenly fell upon Govind Rao's camp and completely destroyed it. The Afghans thus restored their lines of communication, and it was now for the Marathas to suffer from the want of them. For over three months the opposing armies lay encamped before each other, when ultimately the Marathas began to starve for provisions. "Surrounded by carcasses of animals, dying cattle, hungry followers, and hemmed in their camp, their embarrassments were becoming unendurable..... At length the great Mahratta chiefs, wearied by extreme distress, surrounded the Bhau's tent and entreated to put an end to their miseries by a sortie."¹

Maratha
line cut

Maratha
plight

Bhau was now forced to come out from entrenchment and lead an attack on the Afghans. Shouting *Har Har Jae Mahadev*, the Marathas fell upon the Afghans. In the earlier stages, the Marathas seemed to be in a favourable position. But ultimately they were defeated. This happened on 14th January, 1761. Bhau, Wiswas Rao and many other chiefs lost their lives. According to Latif about 2,00,000 of the Marathas were slain, 22, 000 were taken prisoners, while 50,000 horses and an immense booty fell into the Afghan hands.

The fight

Maratha
losses

"This great battle, which has been surpassed by few in carnage, with its disastrous issue for the Mahrattas, sealed the fate of that aspiring nation."² And there were several factors which led to this Maratha disaster. The first and the foremost factor contributing to the failure of the Marathas was their young and hot-blooded leadership. Despite all the commanding genius that Bhau possessed, he was after all a young man with an inclination towards hasty decisions and incapability of adjusting himself, when success did attend his ventures. After his first victory at Delhi, he perhaps turned mad with enthusiasm and wild plans of defeating the Durrani and establishing his sway whole over India. No offers of peaceful settlement could satisfy his reason and ambition.

Disastrous

Causes for
Maratha
failure

Young

Wild

1. Latif, p. 237.

2. Ibid, p. 238.

No advice	<p>The advice of the veterans he looked at only with disdain. He rather distrusted their intellect and experience, and considered himself alone. They were openly condemned, and the result was that everything centred around his own whim, and nobody dared advise him on any subject. Moreover, he had perhaps never been to the northern India before. He possessed poor knowledge of Indian geography, and was ignorant of the habits and life of the people of the northern India. Nor does he seem to have ever experienced the northern Indian climate. His military strategy, too, was ill-conducted and ill-planned. When he left Delhi to meet the Durrani, he committed one of those blunders which ultimately sealed the Maratha fate. Nothing was done to protect and guard the fords of the river Jumna, and as Bhau marched towards the north, the Durrani quietly crossed the Jumna and entrenched himself at Panipat, and the Marathas thus lost one of the best opportunities of their career. Moreover, of the such large army that Bhau possessed, only about ten thousand Marathas under Govind Rao were assigned the duty of securing supplies and trying to cut off the enemy's lines of communication. And the wonder is, when the entire strategy of the battle centred around cutting off each other's supplies, Bhau failed in keeping a reserve which should remain in touch with Govind Rao and help him in the time of emergency. Their poor intelligence service ill-served them, and in a surprise attack, Govind Rao's camp is said to have been destroyed early one morning, and thus the supply lines of the Marathas cut off to force them into a desperate action.</p>
Whim	
Geography	
Climate	
Ill-planned	
Jumna fords	
Supplies	
Intelligence service	
Home oblivious	
Day's notice	
Picnic	<p>Then, the home authorities at Puna, too, seem to have been completely oblivious of the advantages of proper planning and taking regular care of securing supplies to the soldiers on the move. Bhau was ordered to march at a day's notice, and he was to carry with him heavy artillery, a large train of baggage, and the families of the soldiers and the officers—as if he was going on a picnic; but no arrangement of boats was made, and no knowledge regarding any fords on</p>

the river Jumna gathered. Bhau marched, and only when he reached the flooded Jumna, the question of the collection of boats was considered, and parties were sent to search out a ford. Full one precious month of June was thus wasted, which being the hottest month of the country, could best have been used in an attack upon the Afghans, the soldiers given to the climates of the mountains. At Delhi again, the piteous appeals of Bhau to the Peshwa, for the supply of ration, when Delhi itself had failed in meeting their requirements, met only with a failure, for the incapability of the Peshwa to meet the emergent situation.

No boats

Appeals

And then no effort was made to gather the Sikh help from the Punjab, nor any Hindu chief of the northern India was manoeuvred into rendering an aid to the Marathas. Rather the best Hindu landlords and chiefs of the Gangetic Doab rose to oppose the Maratha march into their country. And for this, the characterless habits of the Marathas to loot and plunder their victims with utter ferocity, without any distinction of creed or belief, was much to blame. The Hindus of the northern India, in fact, had already tasted the Maratha rape and recklessness.

No Sikh help

Hindus

Plunder

On the other hand, the Marathas were faced with the fierce Afghans, who had come far off from their country. There was no alternative for them but to win. In fact in the face of the early attack of the Marathas at Panipat, when the Afghans began to flee in confusion, the Grand *Wazir* of the Durrani called them together and addressed them : "Our country is far off, my friends, wither do you fly ?"¹ And then Ahmad Shah Abdali himself was only a seasoned General. He knew how to plan and take advantage of the enemy's weaknesses. Where as the Marathas failed in winning the support of their own countrymen and co-religionists in the northern India, the Durrani invader easily won over to his side the powerful Muslim chiefs of the northern India, such as Shuja-ud-daulah of Oudh.

Fierce Afghans

No alternative

Abdali General

Supported

1. Latif, p. 237.

Durrani

No fruits

Path clear
for SikhsSikh
success

In consequences, the Maratha defeat at Panipat, was bound to introduce a violent change in the future course of the Indian History. Although immediately after his victory at Panipat, the whole of India lay at the mercy of the Durrani conqueror ; his soldiers mutinied to go home and having no confidence and faith in his Indian allies, the Durrani was forced to leave the country without reaping any fruit of his victory. After the Durrani had retired, there was no strong power left behind to establish its full control on the entire Indian empire. The Mughal power had already been tottering, and the process of its decline continued as before. The difference now made was with the Marathas. The Marathas had been steadily spreading their influence, and it was hoped that soon whole of India would pass under their control and they would establish a national Maratha Empire. But this was not to be. The blow the Marathas received at Panipat, took them full one decade to recover ; when after this they re-occupied Delhi. But in the meanwhile, much had happened. English on the east, and the Sikhs on the west, both these powers established themselves. On the 12th of August, 1765, Emperor Shah Alam of Delhi ceded in perpetuity the revenue management of the provinces of Bengal, Behar and Orissa to the English. And in the west, the Sikhs established themselves too securely in the Punjab, to permit the Marathas realise any wild ambition on that land, when they re-occupied Delhi.

The Sikhs continued to develop their power, and ultimately succeeded in establishing their kingdom on the land of five rivers. The English continued to expand their hold, and ultimately succeeded in establishing an empire in India. The Maratha power was ousted from the Indian scene; and it degenerated from a national force into petty local principalities.

C—The Sikh Opportunity

Being concerned here only with the Punjab, we will give here an account, as to how the Sikhs drew an advantage from the opportunity that offered itself. Jarchi Karim Dad

Khan had been appointed by the Durrani, as the incharge of the Lahore government. But soon afterwards, as his services were needed on the front, he was recalled by the Durrani, who now appointed Sarbuland Khan to take charge of the Lahore administration. Sarbuland, however, from fear of the Sikhs, remained himself at Jullundur, and sent Sadat Yar Khan to take charge of the provincial capital. Rustam Khan, the Governor of Chahar Mahal, proceeded to chastise the Sikhs, but he was captured and detained by the Khalsa, and was released only on the payment of a ransom money amounting to twenty-two thousand rupees. When Sadat Khan learnt of the fate of Rustam Khan, he was terrified, and resigned from his office at Lahore. Finding none else bold enough to take charge of the capital, Sarbuland tried to appoint a Hindu banker of the city, named Surat Singh, to assume its charge. But he too was reluctant, and agreed to do so only so long as a suitable man was not discovered for the post. Soon after, Mir Muhammad Khan took charge of the capital. But he too proved as incapable as anybody else.

Sarbuland

Sadat Yar
Khan

Rustam

Sadat
resigned

Surat Singh

Mir
Muhammad

In November, 1760, a large number of the Sikhs assembled at Amritsar to celebrate the festival of *Dewali*. Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, Chet Singh Kenheya, Hari Singh Bhangi, Lehna Singh and some other important Sikhs held a conference, and decided to march on the capital. A *Gurmata* was passed to the effect and the Sikhs soon reached Lahore, and surrounded it from all sides. Part of the city outside the city walls was pillaged. Amir Muhammad Khan the deputy of Sarbuland Khan, and incharge of the capital, terrified at the Sikh approach shut himself up in the fort. They isolated Lahore by cutting off its communication outside, and demanded a heavy sum of thirty thousand rupees for *Karah Prashad*.¹ As they started scaling the walls and causing breaches in them, the inhabitants inside the walls were terrified. Their leaders approached Amir Muhammad Khan and per-

Sikhs on
Lahore

1. The kind of sweetmeat, which the Sikhs make with *ghi*, sugar and flour, and distribute in their *gurdwaras*.

Sikh
demands
met

suaded him ultimately to meet the Sikh demand. The Sikhs received the money and retired.

Khwaja
Obed
governor

Durrani left

In the meanwhile, Ahmad Shah after having defeated the Marathas at Panipat, returned to Lahore. But he did nothing to chastise the Sikhs, and after appointing Khwaja Obed Khan, as the governor of Lahore, Sarbuland Khan, as the Governor of Multan, Zen Khan as that of Sarhind, and Raja Ghumand Chand Katoch of Kangra to take charge of the Jullundur Doab, the Durrani marched towards his country, leaving behind strict orders for his officers to leave nothing undone to destroy the Khalsa.

Molested
by Sikhs

Relieved

The Sikhs, however, were not going to let the Durrani invader retire to his country peacefully. They in fact, had started molesting him right from the Sutlej. While crossing the Beas, he was dispossessed of a large number of the Maratha and other captives, whom he was taking home. After his short stay at Lahore, when the Durrani resumed his march towards his country, the Sikh attacks on his rear started once again, and continued till he crossed the Indus. The Durrani Chief was, therefore, relieved of much of his booty.

Sarhind
pillaged

Malerkotla

When Ahmad Shah Abdali crossed the Indus, the Sikhs returned and spread whole over the province. They completely destroyed one thousand soldiers of Khwaja Mirza Khan, the Governor of Chahar Mahal, and did him to death. Over thirty thousand of them then marched towards the Jullundur Doab, and defeated Sadat Khan and Sidiq Khan Afridi, its *fauj-dars*. After this they marched on Sarhind. Its Governor, Zain Khan, being away at the time, they entered the accursed city and started pillaging it once again. But they were countered in their designs by the troops of Bhikhan Khan, the Malerkotla ruler, who happened to be present in the city. Soon Zain Khan also returned, and the Sikhs leaving the city, fled away. They, however, soon met together, and decided to plunder Malerkotla, to teach a lesson to Bhikhan Khan for his part against them at Sarhind. Malerkotla then

lay defenceless, it was attacked and put to a thorough plunder.

In the meanwhile, Ahmad Shah Abdali had reached Afghanistan, bewailing his losses at the hands of the Sikhs and his incapability to bring from Lahore much of his baggage including the famous *Zamzama* gun prepared at Lahore from a large number of copper and brass vessels collected from the Hindu houses, to be used by Abdali at Panipat. Immediately after reaching Afghanistan, he fitted out a strong expedition of over twelve thousands of his best trained soldiers, and despatched them under the command of a trusted general, Nur-ud-din Khan, to chastise the Sikhs. Orders were issued to the Governors of the Punjab, to give Nur-ud-din Khan every assistance they could.

Durrani
bewailing

Nur-ud-din
sent

Nur-ud-din marched with fury bringing in his train havoc and destruction, which he spread at every place he came across during his march. But before he could meet the main body of the Sikhs, Charat Singh, the Sukerchakia Chief decided to give him a taste of the Sikh arms. Taking the help of some other Sikh Chiefs, he met the Afghans on the banks of the river Chenab, and taking a defensive position, received their attack, and routed them utterly. The Afghans fled the battle-field, and hid their heads in Sialkot, which was besieged. Nur-ud-din, the commander, lost his heart, and in utter hopelessness and lack of the spirit of responsibility, he escaped in disguise and left his soldiers to their fate. The garrison soon capitulated, and the Afghan soldiers were permitted without molestation, to retire to their country. This was a sensational Sikh victory which besides adding to the power and prestige of the Sukerchakia Chief, threw the Punjab Governors into consternation.

Charat
Singh
defeated
him

Sensational
victory

Khawaja Obed, the Governor of Lahore was perturbed more, and after several considerations, he decided to meet the challenge of Charat Singh. He raised an army of about ten thousand horse and foot, and also recruiting one thousand Sikhs of Jullundur Doab, into his army, he marched to Gujranwala, and entrenched himself in a fortified position,

Obed
against
Charat

just near the town. Charat Singh had already prepared himself full to meet the situation and had strongly garrisoned his fort. Taking an offensive, he attacked his enemy at their outposts and forced them to flee into their fortified position. As the news of Khwaja Obed's march on Gujranwala spread, in the meanwhile, the Sikhs gathered from all sides of the Punjab and marched to the assistance of Charat Singh, under their leaders, such as Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, Jai Singh Kanheya and Hari Singh Bhangi. The Khwaja was now surrounded from all sides, and the Sikhs in his service were prevailed upon to desert their Muslim master. The Khwaja getting the intelligence of a proposed combined attack by the Sikhs during a night, found his position utterly hopeless and terror-stricken, he fled with his troops. He was, however, overtaken by the Sikhs and relieved of his cannon, a large number of horses, camels and other valuable articles. This was a death blow to the Governmental authorities, which besides adding yet further lustre to the prestige of Charat Singh, strengthened the belief of the general mass of the people that their best protection lay only in accepting the *Rakhi* and that the days of the Mohammedan authorities in the Punjab themselves were now numbered.

But fled

Death blow

Rakhi

These incessant victories of the Sikhs encouraged them yet further in their ambitions. On 22nd October, 1761, the Sikhs met at Amritsar once again, to celebrate the festival of *Dewali*. By this time they had established their hold on the major portion of the Punjab. But they now felt that their victories could not be considered complete unless they had occupied Lahore, the capital of the State. A *Gurmata*, therefore, was forthwith passed, in which the entire *Dal Khalsa* decided to march on the capital, and capture it. Jussa Singh Ahluwalia soon led the *Dal Khalsa* towards that direction. As the news of their march reached Lahore, the gates of the city were closed, and Khawaja Obed shut himself up in the fort in terror. Jussa Singh besieged the city, and threatened to break its walls. The prominent citizens of the capital met in a conference. They had no hope of receiving any protection from the Governor, and the best course they thought

Amritsar,
DewaliMarch on
Lahore

was to negotiate with Jussa Singh, and throw open the gates of the city to the Sikhs, if Jussa Singh promised not to let the Sikhs plunder them. The negotiations being successful, the gates were thrown open, and the Sikhs entered the city crying aloud '*Sat Sri Akal*.'

Entered it

It was a height of the career of the Sikhs. The entire governmental machinery of the capital fell into the Sikh hands. We do not hear as to what happened to Khwaja Obed thereafter. He perhaps met his death at the hands of the Sikhs. The Sikhs entered the royal mint, and in a flush of victory, struck their coin, which bore the following inscription meaning: 'The coin struck by the grace of God in the country of Ahmad captured by Jussa Kalal':

What about obed ?

Sikh coin

"*Sikka zad dar jahan bafazal-i-Akal,
Mulk-i-Ahmad garift Jussa Kalal*".

The coin thus struck is not now available anywhere. And some writers doubt whether the coin was struck at all. But we have a strong evidence of some contemporary writers such as Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami, the author of *Khazana-i-Amira*¹, which support the view that the coin was actually struck. But as it was struck by the Sikhs in the first flush of their victory, in place of the names of their Gurus, they inscribed the name of their present leader Jussa Singh Ahluwalia on the coin. On a second thought, later on, the discovered their mistake, and the coin seems to have been withdrawn at the suggestion of Jussa Singh himself. We are born out in this by a Muslim writer, Ahmad Yadgar.² And J. Browne, an English minister in the service of Shah Alam at Delhi, who wrote his book, '*India Tracts*', in 1787, also mentions the fact saying "I have several of these rupees in my possession."³

A mistake

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1. The book was written between 1762 and 1763, and its author gives a very good information about the Sikh occupation of Lahore.
 2. *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana*, p. 173.
 3. Browne, ii, p. 27 (footnote).

CHAPTER XXVIII

CONTEST BETWEEN SIKHS AND THE DURRANI, AND THE SIKH ACQUISITION OF TERRITORIES

A—The Sixth Durrani Invasion and the Bara Ghalughara.

Akil Das, an *Udasi Mahant* of Jandiala, had been helping the Durrani invader and the Punjab Governors against the Sikhs. After the Sikhs captured Lahore, they decided to march against him, and Akil Das sent an urgent appeal to the Durrani to come to his rescue. Ahmad Shah Durrani had already learnt of the fall of Lahore to the Sikhs, and had started his march towards the Punjab. When the appeal for help reached him from Akil Das, he made some of those rapid marches for which he was celebrated, and soon reached Lahore, and establishing his head-quarters there, he marched towards Jandiala, which had in the meanwhile been besieged by the Sikhs. When the Durrani reached Jandiala, the Sikhs, however, had already raised their siege, and marched towards Sarhind, where they attacked Zain Khan, its Governor.

Sikhs
against
Akil Das

Durrani
came to
help him

Durrani at
Lohore

His surprise
appearance
at
Malerkotla

Abdali came back to Lahore; and from here he issued orders to the Muslim Jagirdars, and the chiefs of Baroch, Malerkotla and other military stations, to join Zain Khan immediately at Sarhind. The temporary absence of the Durrani from the field perhaps made the Sikhs to believe that he had entirely abandoned the further persecution of war with them. And it was an utter surprise to them when marching from Lahore, and covering the distance of 150 miles and crossing two rivers in not more than thirty-six hours, the

Durrani suddenly appeared at Malerkotla on 5th February, 1762. The Sikhs, estimated at about 50,000 were encamped at this time at the village Kup, about six miles north of Malerkotla; with their baggage train consisting of their provisions, women and children lying at Pind Garma, a village about four miles distant from that place. On hearing of the Durrani's sudden arrival at Malerkotla, the Sikhs hastened towards the Pind Garma. But here they found the Durrani superior to them in war strategy, whose purpose was to prevent their junction with their baggage train. Zain Khan fell upon them to prevent their march, and pursued them for about a mile. The Sikhs had to turn and fight with Zain Khan, who was defeated, and the Sikhs marched once again towards Pind Garma. They had just reached the village, and were going to enter it when the Afghans intercepted them. The Sikhs were surrounded from all the sides, and thrown into an utterly hopeless situation, in which they were forced to fight with the Afghans, a pitched battle; while they had only been used to the method of attacking and fleeing, a method, which was called by them '*Dhai Phat*'¹. The Sikhs sent some of their veteran warriors, to guide the baggage train towards Barnala, and the main body of them arranged itself into the shape of a rough square, and also began their slow march towards that place. It was a terrible job for them, fighting on all the sides; separated from their women, children, arms, ammunition, and other provisions, regarding the destruction of which they awaited the news at any moment; and moving slowly towards Barnala. The roaring cannons of the enemy wrought a havoc in their ranks, but such was the courage, fortitude and dogged tenacity of these men of an iron-will, that they answered the cannons with their swords and small matchlocks, and only 50,000 fighting with 1,50,000² strong of the enemy; the Sikhs gave a determined fight to the Afghans

Towards
Pind GarmaSikhs
interceptedDetermined
fight

1. See Gian Singh, p. 679, *Prachin Panth Prakash*, p. 380.

2. This figure is given by Bhagat Lakshman Singh, p. 210, according to whom it excluded the local levies from the Punjab. His account, however, is only cautiously to be taken.

on the plains of Raipur Gujarwal.¹

Baggage
train
destroyed

Main body
too

At Qutba

Slipped
away

Durrani
stopped

The causes

The Sikh
loss

Different
views

The Sikh baggage train being separated from them, about eight hundred picked Afghans fell on it, and did a short work of the large number of their women, children, servants and the soldiers guiding and guarding it towards Barnala. Of the main body of the Sikhs too, a very large number were massacred, till towards the evening they reached the village Qutba. Here there was a large pond of water towards which the Afghans rushed to quench their thirst. By this time, the Sikh baggage train having been completely destroyed, they had no women and cry of the children to slow down their pace. They took advantage of the situation and slipped to Barnala in rapid strides. The Durrani himself continued their pursuit right upto Barnala, and inflicted some more minor losses on the Sikhs. But from here he retired.

The Sikhs had by this time already lost heavily, and the Durrani thought it sufficient to establish the superiority of his strength, and supposed that it would deter the Sikhs in future from entertaining some wild ambition against his government in the Punjab. Moreover, the sun had now set ; the Sikhs were now a considerable distance ahead of the Afghans ; the sandy country arround ; the scarcity of water, and his tired soldiers who had covered besides the twenty-five miles distance from Kup to Barnala, also 150 miles from Lahore to Kup, in a continuous stride ; all these considerations led him to think advisable not to continue the pursuit any further. Besides, he too had lost heavily during the course of the day's fight, and his soldiers were unwilling to engage into another action with the Sikhs at that time. The Durrani, therefore, withdrew.

The historians have variously estimated the losses of the Sikhs from Kup to Barnala in killed. While the minimum figure of 10,000,² given by Sarkar may seem too small for all that the Sikhs suffered and lost ; Rattan Singh's figure of

1. Ibid.

2. Sarkar, ii, p. 486.

50,000¹ is clearly an exaggeration. Latif accepts the figure of 24,000, given by Rai Kanheya Lal, as approximately correct². Whatever be the correct number of the Sikhs killed, there is no doubt that the losses the Sikhs suffered in their killed were very heavy. And the Sikhs called this the '*Bara Ghalughara*', or the 'Big Carnage.'

*Bara
Ghalughara*

Barnala being a fortified town within the territory of Ala Singh, the founder of the Patiala house, when Ahmad Shah reached there, he expected Ala Singh to come and pay him homage. But after such destruction of the Sikhs, if Ala Singh paid him homage, he was sure to incur the displeasure of his co-religionists, which he could ill-afford. He therefore desisted from the action, which gave an opportunity to his enemies, such as Lachhmi Narain, the Dewan of the Sarhind province, and the Nawab of Malerkotla etc., who were already jealous of his growing power. They poisoned the Durrani's ears, who marched on Barnala, and pillaged its surrounding territories. Ala Singh escaped, but later with the intercession of Shah Wali Khan, the grand *Wazir* of the Durrani, and Najib-ud-daula, he presented himself before the Durrani. According to some writers his hair were ordered to be cut off, but Ala Singh purchased them by paying one and a quartar lakhs of rupees, and thus saved them from being removed. According to Latif, Ala Singh's wife, Rani Fattu, paid the invader another sum of Rs. 4 lakhs, to secure his release. Besides, the king himself is said to have been impressed much with the manly deportment of Ala Singh, so that he conferred a rich *Khilat* on him, and despatched a *firman* to the Sarhind Governor, to restore his jagirs. The title of *raja* was also conferred on him, and after promising an annual tribute, Ala Singh secured his release, and struck a coin bearing the Shah's name, as the bestower of the kingdom.³

At Barnala

Poisoned
Pillaged

Ala Singh's
hair

Ala
honoured

After this Ahmad Shah moved to Lahore, and from there to Amritsar, where he ordered the Sikh temple to be

Durrani at
Amritsar

1. *Prachin Panth Prakash*, p. 457.

2. Latif, p. 283. (footnote)

3. See Latif, p. 284; also Tahmas Khan Miskin, *Tazhira-i-Tahmas Miskin*, pp. 243-44.

The
destruction

blown away by gunpowder. Here a missile from the blown up edifice is said to have struck the Shah's knee, upon which he ordered a hasty retreat. But before doing that he filled up the sacred tank with refuse, and polluted it with the entrails and blood of cows and bullocks ; the same being scattered all around by Kalandar Khan, a Durrani chief.

Pyramids

At Lahore too, numerous pyramids of the heads of the Sikhs were made and walls of the important mosques in the city were smeared with the Sikh blood. He remained in the capital for quite a few months, during which the representatives of the Emperor of Delhi, and the Peshwa, paid him homage ; and the Shah recognising the Peshwa's authority, established friendly relations with him.

Smeared
with blood

Peshwa and
Emperor

Kashmir
annexed

During this period, two expeditions were sent against Sukhjiwan Mal, the Governor of Kashmir, who declared himself to be independent of the Durrani authority. The second expedition under Nur-ud-din, was successful, the Kashmir Governor was captured, and the valley was annexed to the Afghan empire.

Complacent

Ahmad Shah by this time seems to have become completely complacent, feeling that there was no more a possibility of the Sikh rise again, after such a crushing blow. But he was mistaken in this. The crushing blows only animated the Sikhs, and when being ill-treated by the Brar *Jats* of the Malwa desert, they reached the safer places, such as Farid Kot and Bhatinda, they called a general conference of the Sikhs, in which the Sikh position was reviewed. The Sikhs burnt with the spirit of revenge, and assigned their defeat to a surprise attack of the Durrani, to the Afghan superiority in their artillery, to the Sikhs being weighed down by their heavy baggage and to the failure of their arms supply. They, therefore, decided to break the Shah's pride and complacency, while he was yet in the Punjab. They passed a resolution and decided to visit Amritsar, re-erect their temple, and clear their sacred tank of its garbage. In May, 1762, just three months after their heavy losses at Kup, they attacked Sarhind, and made its Governor, Zain Khan, secure peace only at the

Break
Shah's
pride

Attacked
Sarhind

payment of fifty thousand rupees. In August, they visited Amritsar, and started repairing their temple etc. Ahmad Shah was at this time at Kalanaur, where he had retired to escape from the terrible heat of Lahore. From there he sent several expeditions against the Sikhs, but to his utter exasperation, they all came back fleeing after having tasted the Sikh arms.

Expeditions
failed

Jussa Singh Ahluwalia brought the entire membership of the *Dal Khalsa* together, and in August, the same year, he spread whole over the Jullundur Doab, subjecting to pillage, those who had shown some hostility towards them in the days of their troubles. The envoys of the Delhi emperor proceeding towards the Abdali, had to go back from Panipat, because of the fear of the Sikhs, who were plundering the territories nearby. In October, 1762, the Sikhs came to Amritsar to celebrate their *Dewali*. Ahmad Shah Abdali had by this time come back to Lahore, still very much confident that the Sikhs would not be so daring to gather at Amritsar, only thirty miles distant from him, after their reverses at Kup. An important portion of his army had gone away to conquer Kashmir, and he did not have a very large number of soldiers stationed with him at Lahore. He was, therefore, taken completely unawares, when the Sikhs gathered so near him to celebrate their festival.

Jullundur
Doab

The envoys

Assembled
at Amritsar

Taken
unawares

Apprehending a sure trouble at the hands of the Sikhs, and finding his position desperate, he sent an envoy to the Sikh to negotiate peace with them. But he being beaten away by the Sikhs, the Shah felt insulted and taking with him whatever of the soldiers he had, he marched on Amritsar. The Sikhs were fighting this time from their religious centre, where to die was a privilege and a sure passport to heaven. Moreover the memories of Kup were still fresh in their minds, for avenging which, in fact they had been just seeking an opportunity. They, therefore showed such fierceness of action in the battle that followed, the like of which the Shah had perhaps never seen before. A

Shah's
approach
rejected

The battle

Shah fled

very heavy loss was inflicted upon the Afghans, till due to the approaching darkness of the night both the sides retired to their respective camps and taking the advantage of which, the Shah fled to Lahore. It was a great victory for the Sikhs, and having beaten away the greatest general of Asia, they felt satisfied in having retrieved to a great extent, the loss of their prestige at Kup.

One action

Appoint-
ments

To Kandhar

Ahmad Shah having returned to Lahore, now awaited the arrival of his troops from Kashmir, which soon reached Lahore after having achieved a success. In the meanwhile his Indian friends also began to send their troops to his assistance. But he was able to fight only one action with the Sikhs, near the Lakhi jungle. An insurrection having broken in his own country; appointing a Hindu, named Kabuli Mal, as the Governor of Lahore, recognizing Shah Alam as the emperor of Delhi, recognizing the authority of the Peshwa, in the Deccan; and confirming Zain Khan to the Governorship of Sarhind, and Sadat Yar Khan to that of the Jullundur Doab, the Shah hastened towards Kandhar.

B—The Sikhs Rise Again

Took
LahoreReservoir
excavated

Forster writes what happened after Abdali retired to his country. Soon he writes, the Sikhs "were seen descending from their various holds on the Punjab, which they rapidly laid waste and after several desultory actions, in which the Afghans were defeated, they besieged, and what seems extraordinary, they took the city of Lahore; where wildly indulging the enmity that had never ceased to inflame them against these severe scourges of their nation, they committed violent outrages. The mosques that had been ever rebuilt or restored to use by the Mahometans, were demolished with every mark of contempt and indignation; and the Afghans, in chains, washed the foundations with the blood of hogs. They were also compelled to excavate the reservoir at Amritsar The Sicques, however, keenly

1. See Cunningham, 1853 edition, p. 101.

actuated by resentment, set a bound to the impulse of revenge and though the Afghan massacre and persecution must have been deeply imprinted on their minds, they did not, it is said, destroy one prisoner in cold blood."¹ The Sikhs divided themselves into two *Dals*. The *Budha Dal* under the leadership of Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, spread wholeover the Punjab, punishing those who had worked against them. The *Taruna Dal* under the leadership of Hari Singh Bhangi, remained at Amritsar to repair the Sikh temple. The former consisted, besides the Ahluwalia misl, the Dallewalias, Karor Singhias, Nishanwalias, Shahids and Singhpurias; while the latter included Bhangis, Kanheyas, Nakais, Ramgarhias and the Sukerchakias.

The two
Dals

The first exploit of the *Taruna Dal*, was their sudden march on Kasur, a Pathan settlement, to free a Brahmin lady, who had been seized by its chief, Usman Khan. The town was taken by surprise, Usman Khan offered some resistance with his five hundred men, but they were all instantaneously done to death. The Brahmin lady was restored to her husband, and the town given to free plunder.

Attacked
Kasur

The *Taruna Dal* entered the Jullundur Doab and laid waste its entire territory. Sadat Yar Khan, its Governor, dared not stir out, and shutting himself up in the capital, left the people to their fate.

Jullundur
Doab

In November, 1763, Jahan Khan, the commander-in-chief of Ahmad Shah, marched into the Punjab. But the moment he crossed the Chenab, the Sikhs fell upon him in their full fury, and inflicted upon him such a defeat that he was sent fleeing to Sialkot. The fort of Sialkot was there after besieged, and Jahan Khan now fled to Peshawar, leaving behind his family, which fell into the Sikh hands, but was conducted to Jammu by them without any molestation.

Jahan Khan
defeated

His
family not
touched

After this Jussa Singh Ahluwalia captured and utterly sacked Malerkotla. Their old enemy, Bhikhan Khan, the chief of the place was slain.

Malerkotla
sacked

These successes elated the Sikhs, and they now decided to

1. Forster, Travels, i. p. 321.

Towards
Sarhind

march into the Sarhind province. Kheri was first attacked, and Gangu Brahmin, who had treacherously handed over *Mata Gujri* and the two of her grand-sons to the Sarhind Governor, was put to death together with his entire family. Morandah was next attacked, because two Ranghars, Jani and Mani, who also had been instrumental in handing over *Mata Gujri*, were the residents of this place. They were also done to death, and their families, were destroyed. Here, the Sikhs are said to have destroyed almost the entire population of young Muslims, after they meted out the punishment to Jani and Mani.

Jani and
Mani killed

Zain Khan's
approach
rejected

Zain Khan, the Governor of Sarhind, within whose territories these activities were performed by the Sikhs, was terrified. His approaches to the Sikhs for peace having been rejected, the Sikhs, joined also by Ala Singh, and many jats of the Malwa, and numbering about fifty thousand, besieged Sarhind. Zain Khan's own administration, according to the contemporary writers, like Miskin,¹ being irregular and inefficient, he was disliked by some of his own men and officers. He had a hope of an immediate help, neither from Delhi, nor from Kandhhar. After some time, Zain Khan was obliged to sally forth and attack the Sikhs. The battle between the Sikhs and the Muslim forces was fought seven miles east of Sarhind, at the village Pir Zan Munera, in which the Sikhs gave a crushing defeat to the Muslims, and killed Zain Khan himself and several other Muslim leaders. Sarhind seems to have been besieged towards the close of December, 1763,² but the battle referred to above, probably took place in January, 1764.³

At Pir Zan
Munera
Zain killed

Sarhind
sacked

After this, the Sikhs sacked the town of Sarhind once again. Here the two of Guru Gobind Singh's sons having been executed, the Sikhs gave full play to their vengeance, and every house was either destroyed, or set on fire. "Not a house was left standing", and a custom exists to this day, by which it is considered a meritorious act for every Sikh to carry

1. See *Tazkira-i-Tahmas Miskin*, pp. 249-50, 263.

2. Latif, p. 285.

3. Rattan Singh, p. 501.

away a brick from the place and throw it into the Sutlej, to mark his detestation and abhorrence of the place."¹ It was also at this time, that a *Gurdwara*, named Fatehgrah, is said to have been built at the place, where the two sons of Guru Gobind Singh were bricked alive. Dr. Gupta's view that the walls in which these children were bricked alive, were pulled down by the Sikhs at this time,² does not seem to be correct. For, according to a Sikh tradition, these walls were blown away by a storm shortly after the event. And even if tradition is rejected, we know that Banda Bahadur led his army into Sarhind just after the death of Guru Gobind Singh, and a ruthless retributive justice was meted out to the town on that very occasion, when every Muslim house was plundered and destroyed. The Sikhs attacked this town several times after this, each time levelling its buildings to the ground, and taking away even the timber of their roofs. It is difficult to believe that this wall should have been kept intact during all these events.

Whatever it be, after destroying the town, the Sikhs spread wholeover the Sarhind province, and eight misls Ahluwalia, Bhangi, Dallewalia, Karor Singhia, Nishanwalia, Phulkian, Shahid and the Singhpuria, parcelled out the entire territory among themselves. The tradition describes how in a strange manner the Sikhs occupied the territories. A Sikh would ride a horse, visit a village, and leave an article of his dress with its headman, and then gallop off to another village doing like-wise the whole day and night, till he was left with nothing but short breeches on his body. All these villages, thus became his property, and such was the discipline among the Sikhs that a village thus visited by a Sikh, would not be occupied by another, and thus the entire plains territory between the Sutlej and the Jumna was divided among them. The ruins of the town of Anandpur were unanimously assigned to Bud Singh, an old companion of Guru Gobind Singh, who sold it later for Rs. 25,000 to Ala Singh of Patiala.

A brick

Fatehgarh
built

The walls

Dr. Gupta
wrongProvince
dividedStrange
methodTown to
Ala Singh

1. Latif, p. 285.

2. History of the Sikhs, i, p. 200.

Enter
Gangetic
Doab

In February, 1764, the *Budha Dal* entered the Gangetic Doab for the first time, and laid waste the territories of Najib-ud-daulah the plenipotentiary of Ahmad Shah, and dictator of Delhi, gathering an immense booty. Najib-ud-daula paid the Sikhs an amount of Rs. 11,00,000, thus purchased peace, and the Sikhs retired. In the meanwhile the *Taruna Dal* entered the Jullundur Doab. Sadat Yar Khan fled this time, and his territories were plundered.

Jullundur
Doab

Lahore
surrounded

The *Taruna Dal* then entered Lahore, and demanded of Kabuli Mal, its Governor, to surrender to them all the beef butchers of the place. This was, of course, difficult for the Governor to do, as he did not want to incur the displeasure of his master, Ahmad Shah Abdali. Ultimately, however, a compromise was struck. The Governor chopped off the noses and ears of some of the butchers, and expelled them from the city. He also paid a large sum of money to the Sikhs, and the Sikhs retired. Before retiring, however, Hari Singh Bhangi, the leader of the *Taruna Dal* nominated Tek Chand as a Resident, to advise in the Lahore administration. And thus, the actual administration passed into the Bhangi hands. After this, a section of this *Dal* proceeded under Hari Singh towards Multan.

Tek Chand
resident

Multan

Charat
Singh
Rohtas

Just about this time, Charat Singh proceeded separately towards Rohtas, and its Governor, Sarfaraz Khan, having been permitted to leave the place in peace, his country was occupied by the Sukerchakia chief. Sarbuland Khan, the Kashmir Governor, having arrived in the Punjab to assist Sarfaraz Khan late, he was attacked by Charat Singh, and captured; to be released later on after the payment of Rs. 2,00,000, as a ransom money. Charat Singh continued his conquests, and soon made himself the master of a large territory between the Jhelum and the Indus.

Sarbuland
Khan

Between
Jhelum and
Indus

Multan
Khushab
Chiniot

In the meanwhile, Hari Singh occupied Multan, Jhanda Singh captured the territories of Khushab, Chiniot and Jhang, and several other territories were occupied by some other members of the *Taruna Dal*.

In November, 1764, the Sikhs helped Jawahir Singh, the youthful raja of Bharatpur, in his laying siege of Najib-ud-daulah, in Delhi. But just this time, getting the news of the seventh invasion of the Punjab, by Ahmad Shah Abdali, they deserted the *Jat* raja, Jawahir Singh, and retired to the Punjab.

Against
Najib-ud-
daulah

C—The Seventh Durrani Invasion.

When the news of the Sikh occupation of the Sarhind province, and their devastation and plunder of the rest of the Punjab reached Ahmad Shah, he crossed the Indus for the seventh time in December, 1764, and soon arrived at Lahore. Soon the search for the Sikhs started. The Sikhs had retired once again into the Lakhi jungle, and when they heard of the Shah's search of them, Charat Singh suddenly fell upon the Shah's scouting party, which was soon reinforced by a strong body of troops under Nasir Khan, but had to retire after having suffered a heavy loss. The Shah pursued the Sikhs, and marched on Amritsar, but the Sikhs retired once again into their hideouts; only about thirty of them remaining in the fort, perhaps purposely, to lay down their lives in the *Guru ki Nagri*. These Sikhs sallied out, fought the Afghans, and all died, inflicting a considerable loss on them, in proportion to their number.

Dec. 1764

Charat's
exploit

On
Amritsar

Only thirty

After this the Shah marched towards Sarhind. The Sikhs suddenly fell upon the Afghans at Jandiala, and in the battle that followed, they defeated them, killing Rahim Khan Bakshi. The Afghans were defeated in another battle at Batala, in which Sarbuland Khan received some deep wounds. Another action at Adinanagar remained drawn. Shortly after, the Afghans entered the Jullundur Doab, where the Sikhs gave another battle to the Afghans under the command of Jahan Khan. As the Shah proceeded slowly and crossed the river Sutlej, the Sikhs continued hovering about his camp and attacked his rear several times. The Shah now reached Kunjpura. When the Shah reached Sarhind, Ala Singh presented himself before him, telling him that he had tried to beat out the Sikhs several times, but that they were made

At Jandiala

Batala

Adinanagar

Ala
confirmed
on Sarhind

of such elements that the more one killed them, the more they grew. The Shah gave Ala Singh a kind consideration, and confirmed him as the Governor of Sarhind to pay three and a half lakhs of rupees as an annual tribute.

Shah back

By this time, the month of March had set in, and the Indian summer and rains were approaching fast, when it would make the Afghan life very difficult in the Punjab. And the Shah, therefore, was persuaded by his officers to march back to Afghanistan without chastising the Sikhs. He was not, however, going to have a peaceful journey back home. The *Budha Dal* having joined the *Taruna Dal* by this time, the Sikhs gave the Shah a pitched battle, when the Afghans had just crossed the Sutlej. The fight continued for seven days, as the Afghans marched slowly towards their country. And thus, the Sikhs inflicted heavy losses on the Afghans. The Sikhs continued their attacks upon the Afghans right upto the Chenab, and even when they had crossed it, after which they retired.

Pitched
battle

Afghans
suffered
heavily

Shah's
destructive
actions

During the time Shah remained in the Punjab, he burnt the standing wheat crops in numerous villages. The property of the Sikhs was destroyed, and their temples were plundered and desecrated.

D—The Sikh Opportunity Again

Assembled
at
Amritsar

After the Durrani invader had retired to his country, the Sikhs got once again, a free opportunity of extending and consolidating their territorial acquisitions. They assembled at Amritsar, and started repairing their temple and the fort. The regular prayer was started once again, and the Sikhs exchanged their congratulations.

Lahore
captured
by Bhangis

After the festivities at Amritsar were over, Lehna Singh and Gujar Singh Bhangi decided to capture Lahore. When Kabuli Mal got this information, according to Latif, he hurried "off to Jammu and claimed the protection of Ranjit Deo, one of the hill rajas."¹ His nephew, Amir Singh was

1. Latif, p. 286 ; According Dr. Gupta, however, Kabuli Mal was away in the train of his master (Ahmad Shah). But the Shah had left India at the end of March, 1765, whereas Lahore was occupied in May, the same year. Latif's view, therefore, seems more probable.

left behind to take charge of the administration, but he proved to be quite inefficient in this. The Sikhs besieged the fort, and then winning over some persons working in the fort as gardeners, they found their way in through some hole, and took Amir Singh by surprise, when he was busy enjoying a dance. He was immediately arrested, and put under heavy chains, and thus the fort was occupied. Sobha Singh also soon joined them, and the city was parcelled out by the three, Sobha Singh getting south of Lahore, as far as Niaz Beg ; its eastern portion, including the *haveli* of Kabuli Mal fell to the share of Gujar Singh ; while the rest, including the fort and the *Badshahi masjid*, was assigned to Lehna Singh. Shortly after, when Charat Singh, the strong Sukerchakia chief also marched to Lahore, and claimed a share, the *Zamzama* gun of Ahmad Shah lying at Lahore, was handed over to him.

And
parcelled
out

Charat's
reward

After assuming the sovereignty at Lahore, now for the second time, the Sikhs struck in the royal mint, what later began to be known as '*Gobindshahi rupiya*.' The new Sikh rupee bore the following inscription : *Deg O tegh O fateh O nusrat bedirang, yaft az Nanak Guru Gobind Singh* ; which signifies that grace, power and victory were obtained from Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh.

*Gobindshahi
rupiya
struck*

Across the Jumna

Towards the end of September, 1765, the Sikhs deciding once again to plunder the territories of Najib-ud-Daulah, the dictator of Delhi, both *Budha* and the *Taruna Dals* marched towards that side. Najib's *jagirs* were sacked and thoroughly plundered. Najib made his preparations, and assisted by Amar Singh, the successor and grandson of Ala Singh, met the Sikhs at Shamli. Here a battle was fought in December, in which the Sikhs gave a good account of themselves. But finding it difficult to defeat the superior power of their enemy, they escaped in the darkness of the night. Pursued by Najib, the Sikhs entered the territories of Bharatpur, and began to plunder them. Jawahir Singh, the *Jat* Raja of the territory

Against
Najib

Sikhs
escaped

In
Bharatpur

In Jaipur
helped
Jawahir

had to pay them a heavy sum of seven lakh rupees, before the Sikhs retired from his country. Jawahir Singh, besides, taking this opportunity, offered to help the Sikhs if they entered for loot the country of his enemy, Madho Rao, the *Raja* of Jaipur. The Sikhs agreed and in concert with Jawahir Singh, started ravaging the country of Madho Rao. Soon, however, Madho Rao sought his safety in paying them a heavy subsidy, and the Sikhs retired. Marathas, also having by this time joined Madho Rao, Jawahir Singh too was obliged to withdraw his forces from the Jaipur territories.

Helped
Jawahir
again

Soon however, Jawahir Singh got another opportunity of using these brave soldiers of the Sikhs against his enemies. The Maratha troops under Malhar had carried frequent raids into his territories from their camp at Dholpur. Deciding to end this manace, Jawahir Singh got the Sikh help and marched against them. A battle was fought near Dholpur, where the Sikhs, by their peculiar and strange tactics of running away to put the enemy off its guard, and then attacking it in surprise ; gave a crushing defeat to the Marathas, capturing a large number of their horses and their baggage.

Defeated
Marathas

Back to
Delhi

Najib
defeated
them

After this the Sikhs marched back towards Delhi, and entering the *jagirs* of Najib near the capital, began to plunder them once again. Here, however, they had a bad luck awaiting them. Najib attacked their camp, lying at a distance of a few miles from *Ghat* Kutana on the Jumna, while they were away on a plundering expedition. The Sikhs soon returned, and an action was also fought ; but as they had been taken by surprise, they could not give a good account of themselves, and were thus relieved of almost all the booty they had so far gathered in their adventures across the Malwa. The Sikhs thus retired empty handed.

E—The Eighth Durrani Invasion

December
1766
Sikhs
routed

To restore his authority in the Punjab, Ahmad Shah Abdali led his invasion into this country for the eighth time in December, 1766. After crossing the Indus, the Shah met about eight thousands of the Sikh horse at Behgy, a few miles from Rohtas. The Sikhs were utterly routed, and

a great number of them were slain. This time, however, the Shah was convinced of the futility of his policy of annihilating the rising Sikh power. He thought it better to harness the Sikhs into his service, and therefore, when he reached Lahore, on getting good reports regarding Lehna Singh's administration of it; he sent an offer of the governorship of Lahore in his own behalf to this Sardar. But the Sardar was not prepared to accept this offer at the cost of losing his credit with his co-religionists, and therefore rejected it outright.

Lehna
rejected
Shah's
offer

This added to the Shah's fury, and putting his family in the charge of his brother-in-law at Lahore, he proceeded once again to destroy the Sikh power. But just when he had left for Sarhind, the Sikhs, including Lehna Singh and Charat Singh, who had gathered near Chak, fell on his baggage near Lahore and prepared to besiege the city itself. An urgent call was sent to the Shah, and he had to come back to save the city and his family. The Sikhs retired before he reached Lahore. After coming back to Lahore, the Shah sent a strong force under Jahan Khan, to chastise the Sikhs near Chak. The Durrani, however, suffered heavy losses, and they were preparing to flee from the battle-field when the Shah himself marched to reinforce them. The Sikhs fought with the Shah for some time but ultimately fled away.

Bhangis'
attack

Durrani
losses

From here, the Shah proceeded towards the Jullundur Doab, sending expeditions in all directions to capture and punish the Sikhs. But in almost all these cases, the Durrani faced a failure; even Nasir Khan Baluch, one of the most important of the Shah's generals, being forced by the Sikhs to flee in disgrace. Marching through Giddah, Patiala and Banur, the Shah reached Ismailabad, about twenty miles south of Ambala, where Najib-ud-daulah joined him, and advised him not to proceed towards Delhi, when his rear was being plundered by the Sikhs at every place; who continued hovering around his camp, but kept at a safe distance from him. The Shah accepted the advice, and determined himself to put his house in the Punjab in order.

Durrani's
failure

Shah
towards
Delhi

Back to
Lahore

Amar
Singh
honoured

The Shah now started his march back towards Lahore. On his way back, the Shah was pleased to invest Amar Singh, the successor of Ala Singh, with the title of "*Raja Rajgan Mahendar Bahadur*," and confirmed him as the Governor of Sarhind. He also allowed him to strike a coin in the Shah's name.

At
Machhi-
wara

Najib's
Country

Continuing his march, the Shah reached Machhiwara, wherefrom, several expeditions were sent against the Sikhs ; a good number of them being captured and put to sword. But just as the Shah proceeded by his slow steps on his journey back to Lahore, to his utter exasperation, the Sikhs entered the country of Najib once again, and started plundering it. Jahan Khan was sent once again against the Sikhs, who this time slew many of them and put the rest to flight. But every defeat to the Sikhs, meant to them only to re-organise and get more fierce and revengeful. The more the Durrani tried to destroy them, the bolder they grew. Tact, reconciliation and force, all failed to bring this brave nation to reconcile themselves to the Durrani rule. And Ahmad Shah had ultimately to leave this country in utter hopelessness and disgust.

Shah
hopeless
and
disgusted

Dadan
Khan
Lahore
governor

Shah
retired
leaving
unconsoli-
dated

As the plains of the Punjab burnt with the heat of the summer, and the rivers of this land started swelling, Ahmad Shah decided to put a hasty end to his activities in this country, and appointing Dadan Khan as the Governor of Lahore, he retired to his country, leaving his power in the Punjab unconsolidated, and an easy prey to the ever rising Sikh ambition and power.

F—The Sikh Opportunity

Bhangis
reoccu-
pied
Lahore

Najib's
Country
attacked

As Ahmad Shah left this country, the three Sikh chiefs, Lehna Singh, Gujjar Singh and Sobha Singh, marched once again on Lahore, and obliging Dadan Khan to retire, they occupied the city. In December, 1767, the Sikhs entered the country of Najib once again and pillaged it far and wide. Najib marched against them, and defeated them near Muzaffarnagar. But as he grew old, he too lost his heart and vigour, and in a letter to the Queen-

mother of Shah Alam II, he openly confessed his failure to meet the Sikh menace. He wrote thus : ".....But now Her Majesty must forgive her servant and not expect what he has no ability to perform. The Sikhs have prevailed and they have written to all the tribes in general to join them, pointing to his weakness and encouraging them to cast him out. Her Majesty will consider him now as one unable to provide for his own security here....."¹

Najib
lost
his heart

The Gangetic Doab thus became utterly defenceless. And writes G. R. C. William : "As regularly as the troops were cut, the border chieftains crossed over and levied black-mail from almost every village, in the most systematic manner. Their requisitions were termed *Rakhi*, sometimes euphemistically *Kambli*, i. e. 'blanket money' (perhaps equal to the price of a blanket). Each of them had a certain well-known beat or circle, so well-recognized and so clearly defined that it is not unusual for the peasantry at the present day to speak of some places being for instance, in Jode Singh's *Patti*, others in Diwan Singh's or Himmat Singh's, and so on."²

Gangetic
Doab
defenceless

Sikh
exploits

The Sikhs developed their power and influence in the Gangetic Doab, and plundered Delhi, and went even to the extent of trying to play as king-makers, in which, however, they failed due to their mutual differences.

No king-
makers

G—Ninth and the Tenth Durrani Invasions. Shah's Death, Estimate and Failure.

In December, 1768, Ahmad Shah Abdali left Kandhar once again to try to re-establish his power in the Punjab. But the times had by now changed, and the declining period of his life had commenced. "He had been suffering the most excruciating pain from cancer of the nose ever since 1764, and now old age appeared to be creeping upon him ; for the loss of his martial spirit and activity were perceptible, and were the common topics of conversation with both his

Ninth

The
declining
period
Cancer

Old

1. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, (translated by Imperial Records Department, Calcutta), ii, p. 847.

2. Calcutta Review, (1875), pp. 28-29.

Friends and enemies friends and his enemies ; the former looking forward with anxiety to the dissolution of their leader, and the latter regarding with great satisfaction the approaching demise of their dreaded chastiser."¹

Disruption Moreover, the disruptions in Afghanistan itself, worried the Shah the most. India was slipping away from his hands, the end of his life was knocking at his door, and his own soldiers had completely lost their confidence against the Sikhs. No confidence The fatigue of the repeated invasions of India, the prospects of the terrible heat of the Punjab plains and the swelled rivers of this country, all this robbed these soldiers of their old enthusiasm and spirit. The falling revenues of India had disabled the Shah from meeting regularly the salary bills of the soldiers, and they grew refractory. As he marched, between Kabul and Peshawar, a tumult arose in his army, which resulted in the death of many of his important officers and soldiers. A great number of soldiers were dispersed, and the Shah marched back to Kandhar in a miserable condition, without crossing the Indus.

The tenth In December 1769, the Shah decided once again to march into India. He is said to have been led into this decision to divert the attention of the turbulent Afghans. But his soldiers were not prepared to risk a fight with the brave nation of the Sikhs. They accompanied him perhaps to escape from the bitter cold of Afghanistan and spend a few days in the more pleasant climate of Peshawar, at the Shah's expense. After reaching Peshawar, therefore, they became refractory, and the Shah losing his control over them, was obliged to march back, without crossing, once again, the river Indus.

Shah back After this he never ventured to lead another expedition into India. As he was growing old, his health failed him, and he retired to the Achakzai country, where at Murgha, he died on 14th April, 1772, and thus ended the long story of his fruitless efforts to establish his power in the Punjab.

Died 1772 Good, great and a wise prince, as Ahmad Shah was,

1. Latif, p. 288.

Character
estimate

Latif writes of him: "If we compare him with the majority of Asiatic rulers, we find him more lenient and less grasping than those whom he subdued; to his subjects, considerate and just to a degree; to those whom he admitted to his society, affable, hilarious and free; to those who suffered in his cause, or in any way aided him, bountiful and generous; to the poor and needy, ever friendly and charitable; and to the rebellious more severe than the severest".¹ It is said that once when the Shah was engaged in the siege of Nishapur, some of his troops, who had not been paid their salary, mutinied and fell upon his treasury. When the Shah learnt of it, he kept his patience and simply remarked that they were equal partners in his fortunes.

His
patience

His administration in Afghanistan atleast, showed a reformer and an efficient organiser in the Shah at his best. He stopped such punishments of the criminals in his country as that of cutting off the limbs. The law permitted the widows to marry some nearest of their kin, except father or a son. The divorce system is said to have been abolished by him. Domestic servants were given better citizenship rights. The system of prostration before the sovereign was abolished, and priests and Sayyids were given special rights and privileges, as they could sit and dine with the king. Within Afghanistan, his taxation was not heavy, the remunerations to the State officers were liberal and they were contented. And this was the reason perhaps, that made him as much oppressive in some parts of his kingdom, such as Turkistan and India, as he was a liberal in Afghanistan.

His
reformsPunish-
mentsWidow-
marriage

Divorce

Domestic
servants

Prostration

Priests

Taxation

Remune-
rationOppressive
and liberal

His soldiers were permitted a share in the booty that fell in his hands after a victory. And liberal allowances to them were probably the main cause of his being less considerate in his devastation of the territories of India. He was never satiated, whatever the amount of wealth he gathered.

Never
satiated

He shed a lot of blood in India, and the Sikhs of the Punjab were his worst victims. Wherever he went in the

Blood-shed

1. Latif, p. 289.

Punjab, he carried with him loot and plunder, and that was done perhaps to thrill his Afghan soldiers, or to please his Indian friends. But we may perhaps excuse him in this, as Latif does, on the score that, that was the wont of the conquerors of the time.

The wont

Learned

The Shah courted the learned society of men, and showed a great respect to the leaders of his religion. "He was himself highly educated, and he encouraged learning in others, wherever he found it practicable. He maintained his dignity in public with all the solemnity and grandeur of an Asiatic potentate, and was very punctilious in all State ceremonials".

Dignity

Easy access

Still, however, one could have an easy access to him, and he had some of those qualities of kindness and consideration, which could very well be considered as an antithesis of the ferocious Afghan character, to which he belonged.

Antithesis

Freed
Afghanistan

One of the greatest generals and conquerors of Asia, it was he who freed Afghanistan from the shackles of her centuries old political slavery, and established her as an independent and one of the strongest empires of the time. His sceptre extended from Khorasan to Sarhind, and from the Oxus to the Persian Gulf. "His enemies trembled and his friends took fresh courage at the mention of his name."²

His sceptre

Causes of
his failure

Yet, however, he utterly failed in establishing his complete hold in the Punjab ; there being several reasons for this. One of the most potent causes of his failure was his growing age and falling health. He had a cancer in his nose which grew with his growing age, and ultimately became incurable. The weakness of his old age, coupled with the painful and incurable disease, made his last years so miserable that at moments he is said to have cried looking towards heaven, that earlier the death came to him the better. Then his generous policy of toleration, high salaries and light taxation in his own country, though gave him the reputation of a kind-hearted liberal king in his early years ; proved for him to be

Age and
health
Cancer

Miserable

Wrong
generosity

1. Latif, p. 289.

2. Ibid.

ultimately ruinous. His income from revenue within his country was low, while the ever increasing number of soldiers in his army increased his expenditure. The only hope of meeting the deficit was the large amount of booty which fell to his hands as a result of his exploits in India. But as the time passed the booty grew scarce, and the revenues from India fell as a result of the chaotic conditions which prevailed in this country. Najib-ud-daulah, his plenipotentiary at Delhi, for instance, paid him only two lakhs of rupees in seven years, in place of about two crores which he had to pay. It was, thus, growing ever more difficult to meet salary bills of the soldiers, with the result that they now became refractory and unreliable, and sometimes they actually mutinied, as it happened when he planned his ninth invasion of India.

Scarce
revenue

Soldiers
refractory

Nor did his Indian friends and allies remain faithful to him till his last years. Almost all of them were opportunists, and they helped him so long as it suited their purpose. But when they became convinced that the Durrani would not be able to establish rule in the Punjab, and that the Sikhs in that country were getting too strong for him to deal with successfully, they turned their backs towards him. Thus, during his eighth and the last campaign in India, only Najib-ud-daulah is said to have presented himself before him, while the rest turned perfectly deaf ears to his calls.

Unfaithful
friends of
India

Only Najib-

And then opposed to him were the Sikhs, a nation of warriors, the men of iron-will, the people determined to protect their national honour and self-respect. In this connection we may well quote Qaz 'ur Muhammad, the well known bigoted author, who accompanied the Shah in his invasion in 1764. While having no friendly feelings towards their religion and beliefs, yet the Qazi seems to have been compelled to recognise certain qualities in the Sikhs. And he says : "Do not call Sikhs "dogs," because they are lions and are brave like lions in a battle-field..... If you cherish a desire of learning the art of war, come before them in the field..... You may know that their title is Singh

The Sikh
opposition

Nur
Muham-
mad's
view

The Sikh
bravery

(lion) and it is injustice to call them dogs. O youth ! If you are ignorant of the Hindi language, (I can tell you that) the meaning of Singh is lion. In fact they are lions at the time of battle and when in festivities they surpass Hatim (in generosity). When they take hold of the Indian sword in hand they gallop from Hind (Gangetic Doab, invaded in February, 1764) upto the country of Sind. Nobody, however strong and wealthy, dares to oppose them. When they fight with a spear, they bring defeat to the army of the enemy. When they hold the spear-head upward they break to pieces even the Caucasus Mountain. When they bend a bow they set in it the foe-killing arrow. When they pull it up to the ear, the body of the enemy trembles like a cane. If their hatchet strikes a coat of mail, then this coat of mail itself on the body of the enemy becomes a shroud. The body of each of them looks like a hillock and in grandeur excels fifty men. Bahram Gor (a Persian hero) killed wild asses and could frighten tigers. If Bahram Gor comes before them, he also would admit their superiority."

A hillock

No flight

"O hero ! if their troops take to flight, do not consider it a defeat. It is a trick of their mode of war. May God forbid the repetition of such a fraud ! They resort to this deception in order to make the angry enemy grow bold and run in their pursuit. When they find them separated from their main body and away from help and reinforcement, they at once turn back and give them the hardest possible time."

Good
character

"Besides their fighting, listen to one thing more in which they excel all other warriors. They never kill a coward and do not obstruct one who flees from the field. They do not rob a woman of her gold and ornaments, may she be a queen or a slave-girl. Adultery also does not exist among the "dogs." None of them is a thief."¹ And little wonder, therefore, such a people as the Sikhs were, were bound to have the victory ultimately kiss their feet.

1. Jungnama, pp. 172-5 ; Quoted by Dr. Gupta, History of the Sikhs, i, pp. 288-290.

The Sikhs had Amritsar as the source of their inspiration, and the more the Durrani tried to destroy their temple and tank, the bolder and the more revengeful they grew. Amritsar to the Sikhs, in fact, was a symbol of their national unity and independence, and when they sat inside it, and repeated the heroic tales of their Gurus and ancestors, their spirits were touched with a living enthusiasm and courage to fight and lay down their lives. Many a Sikh rather sought ardently an opportunity to have the privilege of laying down his life at this their *Guru ki nagri*, and it was a blunder of the Durrani indeed, that by trying to destroy their temple and tank, he rather aroused the most dormant of their energy, into a vigorous action.

Importance
of Amritsar

And its
part

Besides their courage and bravery, and their religious spirit as a source of inspiration, the other factors which contributed towards the ultimate victory of the Sikhs and the failure of Ahmad Shah Abdali were, the triangular contest for power in the Punjab for some time, between the Mughals, the Marathas and the Afghans. Whenever there was a clash between the Afghans and the Marathas, between the Afghans and the Mughals, or between the Marathas and the Mughals, the parties clashed and exhausted themselves, and the political confusion which resulted, gave the best opportunity to the Sikhs to fish in the troubled waters. When the Maratha and the Mughal powers had been excluded from the Punjab, and now when the contest lay only between the Sikhs and the Afghans, the latter occupied only a disadvantageous position, as discussed above, while the Sikhs being the inhabitants of the Punjab, knew its geography, and hideouts to which they retreated at the time of emergency, which were utterly difficult for the Afghans to approach. The Lakhi jungles and the hills such as those of Jammu, provided the Sikhs with their best retreats, which were utterly difficult for the Afghans to reach.

The
triangular
contest

Afghan
ignorance of
Punjab
geography

The Sikh
hideouts

Then, the Sikhs had very capable leaders, such as Nawab Kapur Singh and Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. Their organisation, the *Dal Khalsa*, gave them unity and discipline, their leaders

Sikh
capable
leaders

And Dal
Khalsa

showed them the path to march upon, and the Sikhs marched from one victory to another, and ultimately to independence and self-government.

No mass
sympathy

And lastly we may say, the Afghan rule could be a success in this country only if they won the willing sympathies of the general mass of its people. But in this they utterly failed. Thanks to their lust for booty, while plundering the Indian houses, they made no distinction of caste, creed and religion. Of the Afghan atrocities, writes Mustafa, who translated *Siyar-ul-Mutakharin*: "Their method of carrying away a male prisoner is this, although not even themselves would use it to carry an ox or an ass. They bore a hole in his shoulder, under the calvicula bone so remarkable in it, and passing a thong or rope through it, make the end of it fast to their saddle, and then mount and trot away; The women abused by them in an abominable manner, fled from them, and always preferred a well to an Afghan. Girls of twelve and fourteen have become unmarriageable in their diabolical hands." Such was the fear of the Afghans, that the proverb of those days is still remebered by the people:

Afghan
atrocities

Their fear

ਖਾਦਾ ਪੀਤਾ ਲਾਹੇ ਦਾ ।
ਰੋਂਦਾ ਆਮਦ ਸਾਹੇ ਦਾ ॥

meaning, "What we actually eat and drink is our own ; the rest is all Ahmad Shah's." Ahmad Shah, according to the popular belief, left nothing for the people, "except what was actually in their mouths, but swallowed up everything himself."¹

Safety in
Sikh hands

The Indian government had failed the people. The foreign invaders plundered them and showed towards them a barbarous treatment. The safety of the people lay only in the hands of the Sikhs. And it is no wonder that the Sikhs succeeded where both Mughals and the Durrani failed.

The glory

For the sake of their country's independence, and the freedom of their people's conscience; all the glory and honour to the heroes, who laid down their lives, but said not a word of plaint; who suffered and died so that the coming generations of their nation may live and flourish.

1. Latif, p. 301.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE SIKH MISLS OR CONFEDERACIES

The Sikhs were organised by Nawab Kapur Singh in 1733, and re-organised in 1788. After the last invasion of the Punjab, by Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Sikhs got their opportunity. They developed their strength and territorial acquisitions, and divided the entire Punjab themselves. In the beginning the Sikhs divided themselves into 65 groups, which later merged into one another, and their number was reduced to twelve. These twelve *jathas* among the Sikhs, established themselves in the different parts of the country, and established themselves as twelve different territorial powers, known as *misls*, or confederacies. One of these *misls*, namely, the Phulkian, was established on the east of the Sutlej, while the rest established themselves on its west.

Sixty-five

Reduced to
Twelve

East and
West of
the Sutlej

Misl is an Arabic word, which means equal, and according to some writers, since there was perfect equality of rights between the different *misls* and within the *misls* themselves, the *jathas* began to be called *misls*. According to another view, however, for the twelve *jathas*, twelve different account books were kept at Amritsar, in which the territorial acquisition of each were entered separately to avoid confusion. These account-books were known as *misls*, and from this, the *jathas* got their names. And as according to Griffin: "The Sikh *misls* were, in popular estimation, twelve in number, and although this enumeration is misleading, and several of the included confederacies were hardly of sufficient importance to warrant their being placed in the list, yet it may for convenience be here adhered to."¹ We may give here a short account of the history and development of these *misls*.

Origin
of the
name

Griffin's
view

1. Griffin, p. 78.

1. The Ahluwalia Misl

Founded
by
Sadao
Singh

Badr
Singh

Jussa
Singh
born 1718

Father
died

Mata
Sundri's
prediction

Kapur
Singh
visited

Secured the
boy

The *misl* was founded by a *Jat*, who was *Kalal*, or a distiller by caste and was known as Sadao Singh. Sadao Singh lived about seven miles east of Lahore in a village, known as Ahlu, from which the *misl* derived its name. Sadao Singh had four sons, Gopal Singh, Hammu, Sekandar and Chaka. From Gopal Singh, Dewa Singh was born. Of the three sons of Dewa Singh, namely, Gurbux Singh, Sadr Singh and Badr Singh, the last named married the sister of one Bhag Singh, who had received the baptism of sword from the hands of Nawab Kapur Singh, and had developed considerable wealth and influence among the Sikhs. Bhag Singh's sister presented Badr Singh with a son in 1718. This newly born baby was the famous Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, who was destined to play a significant role in the history of the Punjab, leading the Khalsa from victory to victory, and clearing for them a path towards national glory and political power.

Jussa Singh was only five years old when his father, Badr Singh died. The widowed mother of Jussa Singh took the child to *Mata Sundri*, the widow of Guru Gobind Singh. Mata Sundri pleased with the appearance of the child, presented him with a silver mace, and predicted that he would grow to a glorious future and would spread his name and fame far and wide. The widowed mother came back with the child and began now to live with his brother Bhag Singh at Jullundur. "Once," Latif writes, "when Kupur Singh went to Bhag Singh's house, he was greatly pleased at seeing the latter's widowed sister playing on the *rubab*, with her long loose hair dishevelled, singing ballads in adoration of the Guru, her beautiful little son, Jussa Singh, playing by her side. Kapur Singh blessed her for her devotion to the faith, and asked her to give him the little boy, whose features gave promise of a brilliant future. The mother, acceding to the wishes of the Sikh Chief, gave him charge of the boy, and from that moment Kapur Singh treated Jussa Singh as his own son."¹

1. History of the Punjab, p. 314.

Soon after this, Bhag Singh died fighting against the imperial forces at Hariana, and he having left no son of his own, his wealth and power devolved as an inheritance on his nephew, Jussa Singh. With such rich inheritance, and under the able supervision and guidance of the greatest of the contemporary Sikh leaders, Jussa Singh soon grew to be an enterprising and intrepid young man. And his "political talents, religious zeal and lofty aspirations combined, rendered him one of the most powerful federal chiefs of the Punjab."¹ It was Jussa Singh who founded the reigning family of Kapurthala. The Sikhs thought it a privilege to take the baptism of sword at his hands; and many such as Amar Singh, the son of Ala Singh of the Phulkian family, were administered the *Pahul* by him.

Bhag
Singh's
wealth
Jussa's
inheritance

Jussa's
popularity

India was attacked by Nadir Shah in 1739, who spread a terror in the country, and carried away an enormous amount of money as his booty. While Nadir Shah was proceeding back towards his country, his rear was plundered at several places by the Sikhs. And the Ahluwalia Sardar is said to have played an important part in this. Shortly after this, Jussa Singh built the fort of Dalewal on the bank of the Ravi, and in 1743, he attacked and carried away a large treasure being carried from Emnabad to Lahore. Zakaria Khan, the Lahore viceroy, was shocked when he received this news, and he ordered Adina Beg, the *faujdar* of the Jullundur Doab, to march against the Sikhs and punish the Ahluwalia Sardar. Jussa Singh, however, fled to the Sutlej, while barbarous persecution against the Sikhs continued. Hundreds of them were captured and brought to Lahore, where at *Shahidganj* they were tortured to death.

Built fort
of
Dalewal

Treasure

Sikh
persecutions

In the meanwhile, Jussa Singh appeared on the Sutlej, punished the miscreant Muslim officers and captured on an extensive territory. In 1747, he attacked Kasur, but just this time Ahmed Shah Abdali appeared in the Punjab, and the Sikhs had to suffer heavily at his hands in the neighbourhood of Sarhind. After the Durrani chief had retired from

On the
Sutlej

After
Durrani

1. Ibid.

the Punjab, Jussa Singh fell upon Gurdit Mal, the deputy of the new Lahore Governor, Muin-ul-Mulk, near Hoshiarpur, but failed in plundering his camp. Shortly after this, he attacked Salabat Khan, who had been put in charge of Amritsar, and after slaying him seized a good portion of that district. In the meanwhile the circumstances at Lahore changed. Safdar Jung the new *Wazir* of Delhi was determined not to let Muin rule at Lahore in peace. He secured from the emperor the Governorship of Multan to Shahnawaz Khan, and assisted him in occupying that province. It was a direct challenge to Muin, whose officers at Multan were expelled and the territory occupied. Muin-ul-Mulk ordered his Dewan Kaura Mal to march on Multan. The Dewan, who had a soft corner for the Sikhs, recommended to Muin that his success against Shahnawaz Khan could be best secured if the Sikh help was requisitioned. Jussa Singh Ahluwalia having succeeded Nawab Kapur Singh in the supreme leadership of the Dal Khalsa in 1748, he was requested for a help against Shahnawaz Khan. Jussa Singh willingly offered the help, and co-operated with Kaura Mal, in 1748, in reducing Multan to Muin's submission. Shahnawaz Khan was killed in the battle, and Jussa Singh received a rich share of booty and honours for himself from Muin.

Jussa's
help
against
Multan

Soon after, however, the Lahore Government began to follow the policy of persecutions against the Sikhs once again. In 1753, Aziz Khan was sent at the head of a large force, who was utterly routed by Jussa Singh. In 1755, the Ahluwalia Sardar defeated Adina Beg at Kadr, and wrested from him the territory of Fatthabad. Just about this time, the Sardar slew Umed Khan, an eunuch Commander of the Lahore troops, in a battle. And shortly after this, he defeated Aziz Khan, who had been sent by Adina Beg to have yet another trial with the Ahluwalia chief.

Aziz
Khan
routed
Defeated
Adina

Umed
Khan

Aziz Khan
again

During the third battle of Panipat in 1761, when Ahmad Shah Abdali was engaged with the Marathas and there was a complete political break down at Lahore, the Sikhs under Jussa Singh got yet another opportunity to spread their

plundering activities whole over the province, and to occupy the different territories themselves. Sarhind was sacked once again, and the Sikhs occupied Dogar and Nypal in the Ferozepur district. Jagraon and Kot Isa Khan on the left side of the Sutlej, together with Hoshiarpur, Bhroz and Naraingarh were seized by Jussa Singh. A contribution was levied from Rai Ibrahim Bhatti, the ruler of Kapurthala. And efforts was made to capture Jhang from Ahmad Khan Sial, the chief of the place, in which, however, Jussa Singh bitterly failed.

Sarhind
sacked

Other
territories
captured

Failed at
Jhang

When Ahmad Shah Abdali retired from India, after being victorious against the Marathas at Panipat; he left Khwaja Obed as the governor of Lahore. Jussa Singh fell upon this city immediately after this, and brought the governor under his subjection. Sarhind was pillaged once again just about this time. And the territories of Laliana, Goindwal, Saliala, Bhopala and Taran Taran were seized. Across the Beas, Sultanpur and Talwandi were also occupied likewise.

After
Panipat

Sarhind etc.

When the news of the Sikh depredations whole over the Punjab reached Ahmad Shah Abdali, he crossed its borders once again, and on 10th February, 1762, he engaged a large concourse of the Sikhs at Barnala, in which thousands of the Sikhs were killed, and many who were captured, were later tortured to death. The losses suffered by the Sikhs in this battle were so great that they called it *Bara Ghallughara* or the big holocaust as compared to the *Chhota Ghallughara* or the small holocaust which they had to suffer at the hands of Dewan Lakhpat Rai. Jussa Singh, however, to the disappointment of the Abdali, effected his escape once again and fled to the Kangra hills.

Durrani
again, 1762

*Bara
Ghallughara*

The spirit of the Ahluwalia chief was yet not blunted. Just after the Abdali had departed, he called the Ramgarhia, Bhangi and the Kanheya *misl*s to his assistance and pillaged Kasur, after defeating its Pathan Chief, Alif Khan; and handed over the territory to the Bhangis, who held it till 1774. The combined forces of the Khalsa, numbering about 23, 000, then fell upon Sarhind once again, and slaying Zain

Pillaged
Kasur

Sarhind

Zain killed

Khan, its Afghan governor, sacked this cursed city and razed it to the ground. This was a very important victory for the Sikhs, after which they spread over all the surrounding territories, and brought them under their subjection. Jussa Singh now marched to Amritsar, where he helped in restoring the Sikh temple and the tank, and laid in the city the foundations of a new *bazar*, known as the Ahluwalia *Bazar*. Moving across the Sutlej in 1768, Jussa Singh sacked Ghaziud-din-nagar and Anup Shahr in the neighbourhood of Delhi, and routed the troops of Mirza Sukhan, a Mughal General, who had been sent against him. He captured Raikot in 1771 and wrested Kapurthala from Rai Ibrahim Bhatti in 1778.

New Bazar

Other exploits

By this time the flood of the Afghan invasions having been blocked up, the Muslim authority in the Punjab having been destroyed, and Delhi having been thrown into complete political confusion; the Sikhs who had parcelled out the major portion of the Punjab among twelve of their divisions called the *misls*, they now entered into the period of mutual warfare and jealousies, which was so natural when they changed their character from men of religion into political rulers and *zamindars*. There was a clash between the Ahluwalia and the Ramgarhia *misls*. In 1776, the Ahluwalia Chief invited the Sukarchakias, the Kanheyas and the Bhangis to his assistance, and in a war that was declared against the Ramgarhias, Jussa Singh Ramgarhia had to face a discomfiture and flee to the Hariana country, leaving his possessions north of the Sutlej into the hands of the allies.

Clash with Ramgarhia

Ramgarhia left north

Died 1783

Memorial

Estimate

Jussa Singh died in 1783 at Amritsar, when he was 65 years of age, and a monument to his memory was erected in Dera Baba Atal, just near the Sikh temple. Tall and handsome in person, it was, indeed, "his noble features and attractive looks which, in his infancy, captivated Nawab Kapur Singh, who brought him up as his own son, which helped him on throughout his future career. His arms were of unusual length, and he was a good marks-man with matchlock and bow. His liberality to the poor made him extremely popular. It is said that he never wore a suit of clothes a second time,

but gave it to his attendants. Once, when Ahmad Shah was returning to Kabul, he took with him a body of two thousand Hindu women from the Punjab to serve as slave girls for his countrymen. Prompted by a sense of duty to his fellow-countrymen, he fell on the Shah's troops one night and rescued the innocent creatures from the clutches of the hardy Afghans. He then liberally provided them with money and sent them all under proper escort to their respective homes. This act of courage and patriotism won for Jussa Singh the affectionate regard of all his countrymen, and tended to increase his influence and popularity among all classes of the people."¹

Women
saved

A man of courage, fortitude and kind qualities of heart, from 1748 onwards, Jussa Singh acted as a paramount leader of the Sikhs, and guiding them through one of the darkest periods of their history, he brought them out from a trough of political chaos into the sun-shine of freedom and self-government. If we compare the year 1783, when Jussa Singh died, with the year 1748, when he was handed over the destiny of the Khalsa by Nawab Kapur Singh, if we imagine the trials and commotions through which the Sikh nation passed and the ultimate success which attended their exploits, and if we consider how the persecuting hands of the Muslim authorities in the Punjab were restrained and crushed and the flood of the Durrani invasions was rolled across the Indus; it would be a wonder if we did not reach a conclusion that a sort of revolution had been effected during this period in the fortunes of the Sikhs and the destiny of the Punjab as a whole. And all this happened under the leadership and guidance of this Ahluwalia Sardar.

Paramount
leader

Effected a
revolution

Jussa Singh was called *Badshah* (king) "by his dependants and followers, though not by the Sikhs generally." And the esteem in which he was held by the general mass of the Sikhs, is clear from the coin which was struck in his name, when the Sikhs occupied Lahore, as previously discussed.

A *Badshah*

Jussa Singh died without leaving a male issue, and he

1. Latif, pp. 316-17.

- Succeeded by Bhag Singh was succeeded in the chiefship of his *misl* consisting of territories lying chiefly in the tract of country between the rivers Sutlej and Beas, by his second cousin Bhag Singh. Jussa Singh Ramgarhia joined by Sansar Chand Katotch of Kangra attacked the Ahluwalias under Hamir Singh. Bhag Singh ran to Hamir Singh's rescue, but suddenly fell ill. Being carried back to Kapurthala, he died shortly after this in 1801.
- Bhag died 1801
- Fateh Singh succeeded Bhag Singh was succeeded by his only son, Fateh Singh, who had been born in 1784. He was quite young of age when Ranjit Singh conquered Lahore. Fateh Singh is said to have hurried to Ranjit Singh and promised to him his full support in the young Maharaja's efforts to consolidate the Sikh *raj* in the Punjab. In 1802, he exchanged his turban with the Maharaja as a mark of perpetual friendship between the two ; and after this, as Metcalfe wrote in 1809 : "The quiet character of Fateh Singh, who was the equal, if not the superior, in rank and power, of Ranjit Singh, has yielded to the bold commanding spirit of the other, and he has been the ladder by which Ranjit Singh has mounted to greatness"¹
- Helped Ranjit
- A ladder
- Died 1836 Fateh Singh died in 1836, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Nehal Singh.

2. The Bhangi Misl

- Enslavement to *bhang* The most important *misl* on the north-west of the Sutlej was the Bhangi *misl*, which took its name from its leaders' enslavement to *bhang*, an intoxicating preparation of hemp. The founder of the confederacy was one Chajja Singh, a *Jat*, who belonged to Panjwar, at a distance of eight miles from Amritsar, and was initiated into the Khalsa faith by Banda Bahadur. Chajja Singh in his turn initiated three of his relations, named Bhim Singh who belonged to Kasur, Malla Singh and Jagat Singh, to the Sikh religion ; and all the four co-operating together, carried on their plundering activities against the Muslim government of the day. They were joined by numerous Sikhs, and during the opportunities which offered themselves, they entered into the career of vast con-

1. See for details Dewan Ramjas, '*Twarihh-i-Kapurthala*,' p. 374.

quests in the Punjab.

When Chajja Singh died, he was succeeded to the chiefship of the *misl* by Bhim Singh, who reorganized the confederacy ; and after Nadir Shah's invasion in 1739, he recruited a large number of soldiers to his forces, to establish himself as one of the powerful Sikh leaders of the Punjab.

Bhim Singh
succeeded

After his death, Bhim Singh was succeeded by his nephew Hari Singh, who had already been adopted by him as his son. Hari Singh proved to be a man of yet greater energy and an enterprising spirit. Under him the fighting strength of the *misl* rose to 20,000 men. Hari Singh fixed his head-quarters at the Gilwali village in the Amritsar district and within a short time, he captured Karial, Mirowal and Sialkot. He also sacked Chiniot and Jhang ; and in 1762, he carried away a large magazine from Kot Khwaja Said, about two miles from Lahore. The magazine which contained a very rich amount of the munitions of war, belonged to Khwaja Obed, the Lahore Governor. The Bhangis under Hari Singh captured Rawalpindi, and brought many territories of the Majha and the Malwa under their subjection. They pillaged even the town of Jammu, and made Ranjit Deo, the Rajput ruler of the state their tributary. As a result of all these exploits, the Bhangis gathered rich booty, and their *misl* became the wealthiest of all.

Next
Hari Singh

His
achievements

Wealthiest
misl

The Ramgarhias, the Kanheyas and the Bhangis under Hari Singh, led a joint attack on Kasur in 1763. In 1764, Hari Singh fought with Amar Singh of Patiala, but unfortunately, was killed in the battle-field.

Attacked
Kasur, 1763

Killed, 1764

Of the two wives of Hari Singh, the one had born him two sons, namely Jhanda Singh and Ganda Singh. The second bore him three, namely Charat Singh, Dewan Singh and Bassu Singh. Of these five sons of Hari Singh, Jhanda Singh succeeded him in the chiefship of his *misl* after his death. Under Jhanda Singh, the Bhangis achieved yet greater success in their exploits, and the reputation of the *misl* spread among the Sikhs far and wide; providing the Bhangis with greater number of recruits into their forces.

Jhanda
Singh
succeeded

Greater
success

Multan
attacked

In 1766, Jhanda Singh marched against Shuja Khan, the Muslim governor of Multan, and against Mubarik Khan, the Daudpotras chief, who had emigrated from Sindh and settled in Bhawalpur. As a result of the battle that followed, Pakpattan was declared to be the line of demarcation between the Bhangi territories and those belonging to the Muslim chiefs. Shortly after this, he subdued the Pathan colony of Kasur, and forgetting his treaty, he attacked Multan once again in 1771. He besieged the fort of Multan, but after about a month, the resolute resistance of the Muslims obliged him to raise the siege, and the Bhangis returned unsuccessful, after having suffered a heavy loss.

Subdued
Kasur

Failed at
Multan

Civil war at
Multan,
1772

Only a year after this event, however, Jhanda Singh did get an opportunity to realise his ambition towards Multan. In 1772, there arose a quarrel between Shuja Khan, Sharif Khan and Sharif Beg, the successive governors of the place. Sharif Beg called Jhanda Singh to his assistance. Here was a golden opportunity for this Sardar, who, assisted by his brother Ganda Singh and a Sikh general Lehna Singh, marched upon the city. The enemies of Sharif Beg were defeated in the battle that followed; but to the utter disappointment of this Muslim chief, Multan, the pride possession, was divided between Jhanda Singh and Lehna Singh, and Sahrif Beg was obliged to flee to Khyrpur, where shortly after, he died grief-stricken.

Multan
occupied

Biloch
Jhang
Mankera
Kalabagh

Bhangi
killa

Ramnagar

After this Jhanda Singh sacked the Biloch country, and occupied Jhang, Mankera and Kala Bagh. He then visited Amritsar, and in the present Loon Mandi, he built a small fort for himself, which he named as the *Bhangi Killa*. After this he attacked Ramnagar, and recovered from the Chatta chiefs of this place, the well known gun *Zamzama*, also known as the Bhangi gun.

The last action that Jhanda Singh fought, was against the combined forces of Jai Singh Kanehya, Hakikat Singh Kanheya and Charat Singh Sukerchakia. This event occurred in 1774, when Ranjit Deo, the ruler of Jammu, wanted to dispossess his eldest son, Brij Raj Deo, from succession after his death ;

in favour of his youngest son, Mian Dalel. Charat Singh and Jai Singh supported Brij Raj Deo, while Ranjit Deo was joined by the rulers of Chamba, Kangra, Nurpur, and Basehar. Jhanda Singh also joining the latter. The two opposing parties met on the Basanti river to fight out the issue. But before the decision could be reached, Charat Singh was killed by the bursting of a matchlock from the hands of one of his own men. It should have yielded a complete victory to Jhanda Singh, but just the next day of the death of Charat Singh, he himself was killed by a follower of his own, who is said to have been bribed by Jai Singh Kanheya. Leaving thus the issue to the Jammu family itself, to decide it as best as they could, the two opposing armies dispersed.

Battle on
Basanti
river, 1774

Jhanda
killed

Jhanda Singh was succeeded by his brother Ganda Singh, who pined to avenge the death of the former which had occurred as a result of the Kanheya treachery. The opportunity offered itself when the widow of Nand Singh, a Bhangi *misl*dar, gave away Pathankot as *jagir* to her son-in-law, Tara Singh, the brother of Hakikat Singh Kanheya. Ganda Singh asked the Kanheyas to return him Pathankot, which he said had been bestowed by his brother, Jhanda Singh, on Nand Singh. The Kanheyas naturally rejected this proposal, and joining all the resources under Gurbakhsh Singh, the son of Jai Singh Kanheya, Tara Singh and Hakikat Singh, and also assisted by Amar Singh Bhugga ; they prepared for the war. Ganda Singh, on the other hand, joined by the Ramgarhias, and taking with him the famous *Zamzama* gun, marched against them at the head of a large force. The enemies met at Dina-nagar, but after a few days of indecisive fighting, Ganda Singh was suddenly taken ill, and he died. Desa Singh, his son, being a minor, Ganda Singh was succeeded by his nephew Charat Singh to the chiefship of his *misl*. Charat Singh, however, was killed in an action, shortly after this ; and thus dismayed by their evil destiny, the Bhangis fled the battle-field.

Ganda
Singh
succeeded

Battle with
Kanheyas

At Dina-
nagar

Ganda died

Charat
killed

Bhangis
fled

Desa Singh, the minor son of Ganda Singh, succeeded after this to the Bhangi chiefship. And the decay in the

Desa Singh
succeeded

Decline

misl which had already commenced, now hastened. Disliking the leadership of a stripling, many Bhangi sardars, such as Bhag Singh, declared their independence. The tribute from Jhang was stopped. The effort of Shuja Khan's son Muzzaffar Khan, to recover Multan from the hands of the Bhangis having failed in 1777; Timur Shah, the son and successor of Ahmad Shah Abdali in Afghanistan, marched in person in the winter of 1778-89 to free Multan from the Bhangis; and his expedition proved a success. In the battle that was fought, about 3,000 of the Sikhs are said to have been killed. Timur occupied Multan, and bestowed its Governorship on Shuja Khan, the father of Muzaffar Khan with whom Ranjit Singh had later to fight to re-occupy Multan for the Sikhs. The *misl* continued to weaken so long as Desa Singh continued to be its chief. Desa Singh was killed in 1782, after he had ruled the destiny of the Bhangi *misl* for eight years. This happened while he was fighting an action against Maha Singh Sukerchakia, the father of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Multan lost

Desa killed
1782Besides
main lineGurbux
Singh, a
generalLehna
Singh
successor

Besides the main line of descent of the Bhangi *misl* as detailed above; within the *misl* there existed some chiefs whose exploits merit a separate account. Gurbux Singh, an associate of Bhim Singh, thus, was a brave general who rendered an important service in several of the expeditions led by Hari Singh against his enemies. Before he died issueless leaving behind his personal property consisting of forty villages, he had adopted Lehna Singh as his son to succeed him. Lehna Singh, the son of Dargaha Singh, a *Jat* of the village Suddhawalla, which lay in the district of Amritsar, was, however, challenged at the time of his succession, by Gujar Singh, the son of Gurbux Singh's daughter. And Lehna Singh had to agree to the division of the property with his opponent, into two equal parts. These two Sardars, namely Lehna Singh and Gujar Singh, developed their power in the due course of time to such an extent that they even fell upon Lahore and wrested it from the hands of Kabuli Mal, who had been appointed its Governor by Ahmad Shah Abdali during his last invasion of India. Sobha Singh, a

nephew of Jai Singh Kanheya, also having helped them in the capture of the city, the city was divided between the three Sardars. And this happened in 1765.

Lahore
occupied,
1765

The three joint-governors of Lahore gave a very good account of themselves as administrators. So much so that when two years later Ahmad Shah Abdali made his final descent into the Punjab, and when the three Sardars left the city and fled to Panjwar, the citizens of Lahore collected together and petitioned the invader to confirm them as the Lahore Governors in his own behalf. Accepting the petition, the Durrani chief actually invited these Sardars to come back, but they rejected his offer, as we have already discussed in our previous chapters ;¹ and re-occupied the city after the Shah retired to his country.

Joint-
governors

Rejected,
Durrani

After this, for about thirty years, the three joint-governors of the city continued to reign in peace. But in 1797, they were disturbed once again by Shah Zaman. Shah Zaman had succeeded to the throne of Kabul in 1793. Deciding immediately to attack the Punjab, in December, the same year, he marched at the head of a large force and reached as far as Hassan Abdal unopposed. From here he sent Bahadur Khan and Ahmad Khan, the two of his generals, to march with their 7,000 horse and conquer the Chaj Doab. But soon some fresh disturbances having broken at Herat, he was obliged to abandon his plan for the conquest of the Punjab, and returned to his country.

Disturbed
1797

Shah
Zaman's
march

In December, 1795, Shah Zaman marched once again into the Punjab, and having reached Hassan Abdal, from here he sent a large force under Ahmad Khan, to occupy Rohtas. After the fall of Rohtas, Ghakhars and several other Muslim tribes of the Punjab joined the invaders ; and the Shah's hopes ran high regarding his designs to re-annex the Punjab to the Afghan empire. But unfortunately for him, just this time he received the intelligence regarding the invasion of Western Khorasan by Agha Mohamed Khan, the Persian

Marched
again, 1795

1. See,

But
returned

king, and he returned to Afghanistan once again, without realising his ambition.

Shah
Zaman
invited

Shortly after this, the situation in India took another favourable turn for Shah Zaman. When English and the Marathas developed their power in this country, the effected Mohammedan princes thought it best to appeal to the Shah. Gholam Mohamed from Rohil Khand, and the agents of Nawab Asif-ud-daula, the wazir of Oudh, thus, reached Afghanistan in 1796, and requested the Shah to march on India. They assured him that in his venture he would get full support from the entire mass of the Indian Muslims. Thus being encouraged, the Shah collected a large army of thirty thousand men, and towards the close of the year 1796, he set out once again, to march into the Punjab. This time he succeeded soon in reaching without much difficulty as far as Shah Dara, on the banks of the Ravi, and encamped himself in Jehangir's mausoleum. From here he sent his grand *Wazir*, Hafiz Sher Mohamed Khan, to reduce Lahore. But before *wazir* could reach the city, the joint Governors of the place handed over the keys of the citadel to Mian Shah Charagh, a prominent Muslim of the city, and themselves retired from the place. The capital of the Punjab, thus, fell into the Shah's hands unopposed. This happened on 3rd January, 1797.

Lahore
occupied,
1797

Policy of
conciliation

After the occupation of Lahore, the Shah decided to chastise the Sikhs for their violent activities against the Afghan rule. But the times having by now changed, he was wise enough to understand that it was no more possible now to bring the Sikhs to his subjection merely with the help of sword. The policy of conciliation, where it worked, was thought advisable to follow. And, therefore, besides sending light parties from here on all directions to apprehend the Sikhs, he made offers to pardon those who paid homage to him at Lahore. As a result of this, some Sikh chiefs of the Punjab did make their submission to him. In the meanwhile contacts were established with Tippu Sultan, Sindhia and the Rohillas etc. The Muslims all over India rejoiced at the

Sikh
submissions

prospects of restoration of the Muslim rule in the country once again. From all sides the atmosphere was charged with high hopes and dismay. But once again an incident occurred in Afghanistan, and the Shah was forced to abandon his plans in India once again. The Shah's brother, Prince Mahmud, revolted at Herat, and the Shah was forced to run back to the scene in his country ; leaving behind Ahmad Khan, Barakzai, as incharge of the country between the Jhelum and the Sind.

Shah ran
back

Soon after the departure of the Durrani chief, the joint governors returned and re-occupied the city. But the same year, 1797, Lehna Singh died leaving behind an imbecile son, Chet Singh, to succeed him ; and Sobha Singh died to be succeeded by his son Mohar Singh, who was no better than his companion. The citizens of Lahore met together, and to escape the tyrannical rule of the joint governors, wrote an application to Ranjit Singh inviting him to come and occupy the city. Another application was addressed to Sada Kaur, the mother-in-law of the young prince, requesting her to help him in the respect. Ranjit Singh accepted the offer. He marched on the city, and with the help of the citizens, he occupied it. Of the joint governors, only Chet Singh tried to offer some resistance. But he failed. This happened in the month of July, 1799 ; when shortly after this, Ranjit Singh assuming the title of Maharaja, set out to consolidate the Punjab under his own banner.

Lahore
re-occupied

Application
to Ranjit

Ranjit
occupied
Lahore,
1799

We now come back to the main line of the Bhangi descent. After the death of Desa Singh, the son of Ganda Singh, in 1782, his son Golab Singh succeeded him to the chiefship of the misl. Golab Singh remained at Amritsar, and enlarged this city. He also brought Kasur, the Pathan colony, into his subjection ; but he failed to keep it in that condition for long ; as its chiefs, Kutb-ud-din Khan and Nizam-ud-din Khan, soon re-asserted their independence. Golab Singh proved to be an inefficient ruler, and on account of his sensual character, and feebleness

Main line
again

Golab Singh

Inefficient

of purpose, he soon alienated the people against him. At the fall of Lahore into the hands of Ranjit Singh, Golab Singh sensed a danger, and formed a cabal against him. The cabal consisted of Golab Singh, Sahib Singh Bhangi, Jussa Singh Ramgarhia and Nizam-ud-din of Kasur. The troops of these allied chiefs marched to Bhasin, a village which lay a few miles east of Lahore. Ranjit Singh also had made his preparations, and marched his forces to meet the enemy. At Bhasin, however, the two contending parties lay encamped before each other for about two months. But neither of them dared take the initiative till at last Golab Singh died suddenly of illness, and his friends retired yielding a bloodless victory to Ranjit Singh. This happened in 1800.

The unfought battle of Bhasin gave a great victory to Ranjit Singh. And after this, never could such a formidable concourse of his enemies be formed against him. The enemies of Ranjit Singh now began to weaken, while this young Maharaja gathered strength day after day. Gurdit Singh, a ten years old son of Golab Singh succeeded to the chiefship of this *Misl*. But he being young, his mother, *Mai* Sukhan conducted the affairs for him. But the Bhangis could not continue to remain in that state of affairs for long. In 1805, Ranjit Singh invaded and occupied the city of Amritsar; and within a few years after this, the rest of the Bhangi territories were also absorbed by him. And thus faded the once-so-glorious Bhangi *Misl* steadily into oblivion.

3. The Ramgarhia Misl

The founder of the Ramgarhia *misl* was a *Jat* named Khoshal Singh, who belonged to the Mauza Guga near Amritsar. Khos Singh was said to have received his *Pahul*¹ from the hands of Banda; and through his daring adventures, when the Sikhs whole over the Punjab gathered strength, Khoshal Singh also developed wealth and importance. After his death, Khoshal Singh was succeeded in the

1. Which is, however, doubtful, if we accept the view that Banda never received the *Pahul* himself.

leadership of his band, by one Nand Singh, who belonged to the village Sanghani near Amritsar. Nand Singh gathered yet more power and influence, and expanded the activities and exploits of his band. He, on his death, was succeeded by one Jussa Singh, under whom the band developed into the well known Ramgarhia misl, and reached the climax of its career.

Nand
Singh
succeeded

Then Jussa
Singh

A man of humble origin, Jussa Singh was the grand son of one Hardas Singh ; a carpenter by profession, who belonged to the village Sursing, which lies about nineteen miles east of Khem Karn, in the modern district of Amritsar.¹ Hardas is said to have been initiated into the Khalsa faith by Guru Gobind Singh himself, from whose hands the former received his Pahul. Hardas Singh got himself recruited into the troops of Guru Gobind Singh, and also fought in some battles ; retiring from the Guru's service only when the latter started for the Deccan. Bhagwan Singh, the only son of Hardas Singh, mastered the *Adi Granth* of the Sikhs, and was called a *Gyani*.² He preached the Sikh faith in the neighbouring villages, and later on shifted his residence from Sursing to the village Ichogil, which lay about twelve miles east of Lahore. Bhagwan Singh had five sons, named Jussa Singh, Jai Singh, Khushal Singh, Mali Singh and Tara Singh.

Grand-
father
Hardas
Singh,
carpenter

Sursing
village

Bhagwan
Singh
father

Had five
sons

Jussa Singh was the eldest of Bhagwan Singh's sons. We are completely in the dark, as regards the date of Jussa Singh's birth. But since he is said to have died in 1803, at the ripe age of eighty, according to Gian Singh, the author of *Raj Khalsa*,³ we may automatically deduce that he should have been born in 1723. In his childhood, Jussa Singh is said to have shown the least of an interest in his ancestral profession of carpentry ; with the result that his father, little knowing the prospects for which his son was preparing, became disgusted towards him.

Jussa
eldest

Date of
birth

1723

Father
'isgusted

When Nadir Shah invaded India in 1739, Bhagwan

1. See P. S. Kapur, 'Jussa Singh Ramgarhia,' p. 1.

2. See Dr. Narang, op. cit, p. 253 ; Griffin, *Chiefs of Punjab*, p. 427.

3. *Raj Khalsa*, p. 13.

Service of
Zakariya

Father
died

The
rewards

Jussa's
share

Joined
Nand Singh

Jussa a
leader

Joined
Adina

His
services

Singh, according to Gian Singh¹ and some other writers, was in the service of Zakariya Khan, working as a commander of one hundred horsemen. In the battle that was fought between Nadir Shah and Zakariya Khan at Wazirabad, Bhagwan Singh gave a very good account of himself, and lost his life. According to these writers, Jussa Singh, together with his brothers, also fought in this battle against the invader. As a result of Bhagwan Singh's services to the Lahore governor, his eldest son, Jussa Singh, was granted, after the death of the father, the rank of a *risaldar*. Besides, his five sons were granted a *Jagir*, which consisted of five villages, namely Valla, Verka, Sultanwind, Tung, and Chaha. Of these five villages, Valla fell to the share of Jussa Singh, who shortly after this, settled there and administered it efficiently.

Shortly after this, Jussa Singh, together with two of his brothers, Mali Singh and Tara Singh, joined the band of Nand Singh, under the Dal Khalsa; and within a short time, developed the reputation of being the most daring and intrepid among its members; so much so that when Nand Singh died, Jussa Singh was acknowledged as the indisputable leader of this band.

Jussa Singh's associations with the Dal Khalsa, however, were interrupted for some time, when he joined service with Adina Beg, the *faujdar* of the Jullundur Doab. The date of his joining this service has been a subject of controversy, in which the space does not permit us here to enter.² It is, however, agreed that "Jussa Singh with his two brothers, fought on the side of Adina Beg Khan, when that chief entered into hostilities with the Abdali king, Ahmad Shah, and his gallantry was so conspicuous that Adina Beg gave him the command of his own troops, which, at that time, were

1. *Raj Khalsa*, p. 4; *Itihas Ramgarhia Misl*, pp. 38-39.

2. See for details Gian Singh, *Raj Khalsa*, p. 10; Surat Singh and Darbara Singh, *Itihas-i-Ramgarhia*, pp. 410-11; Dr. H. R. Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. i, p. 9; P. S. Kapur, *Jussa Singh Ramgarhia*.

chiefly Sikhs."¹ According to *Ahwal-i-Adina Beg Khan* (anonymous), Adina Beg was very much pleased with the efficiency of Jussa Singh's service, and appointed him also as an incharge of the civil administration of some territory in which again, the Sardar acquitted himself very creditably. During his service under Adina Beg, Jussa Singh was able to develop his acquaintance with some high state officials such as Kaura Mal, which later proved to be of great service to the Sikhs, as we shall shortly see.

And
reward

In October, 1748, when the Sikhs gathered at Amritsar to celebrate their Dewali, Adina Beg was ordered by Muin-ul-Mulk, the governor of Lahore, to march against them. Jussa Singh accompanied Adina, when the fort of Ram Rauni at Amritsar was besieged. We have studied already how the siege lasted for a considerable time, and out of the five hundred Sikhs who were within the fort, two hundred laid down their lives fighting against the enemy. The three hundred that remained, were reduced to hopeless plight. All the supplies from outside had been stopped by the enemy, and as the provisions within the fort were exhausted, the Sikhs saw starvation and death glaring at them. They were getting desperate, and had just decided to march out in a body and instead of dying of starvation, to die fighting as brave men in the battle-field ; when Jussa Singh in the camp of Adina Beg, decided to come to their rescue and save himself from a complete ex-communication from the Khalsa brotherhood. He deserted Adina, and entered secretly into the fort, to join the helpless Sikhs. From within the fort, he addressed a personal letter to Dewan Kaura Mal at Lahore, and requested him to save the three hundred lives if he could. His appeals to Kaura Mal bore a fruit. The Punjab was just this time threatened by another invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali. This gave an argument to Kaura Mal, who prevailed upon Muin, who agreed to raise the siege and grant the Sikhs a *Jagir* to enable them to settle as peaceful citizens.

Besieged
Ram Rauni

Hopeless
plight

Jussa
deserted
Adina

Saved
Sikhs

It was a great service rendered to the Sikhs by Jussa Singh. Jussa Singh had saved three hundred lives and Ram Rauni from

Misl got its
name

Association
with fort

destruction. His reputation among the Sikhs rose high. And when the siege of the Ram Rauni was raised ; and later on; when the Sikhs marched to assist Kaura Mal against Shahnawaz at Multan ; Jussa Singh was left behind as in-charge of the fort. After this, Jussa Singh's association with this fort developed. He repaired it several times after its destruction, and his "*misl* took its name from Ram Rauni, or 'Fortalice of God,' at Amritsar, converted into Ramgarh, or 'Fort of Lord,' by Jussa Singh the celebrated *thoka*, or carpenter."¹

Ram Rauni
besieged

Jussa
escaped

As the relations between Muin and the Sikhs deteriorated again, Adina Beg and Sadiq Beg were sent once again to besiege the Ram Rauni. Jussa Singh, this time, was caught inside, together with other Sikhs, but at last rushed out fighting and escaped through the enemy lines. The fort was thereafter demolished.

Jussa's
opportunity

When Muin-ul-Mulk died in 1753, the Punjab was thrown into an utter disorder and anarchy. Jussa Singh took an advantage of the situation, and rebuilt the fort. Under Timur, the Durrani governor of Lahore, the fort was destroyed again. But when Timur was expelled from the Punjab by the combined forces of the Sikhs, Marathas and Adina Beg ; the fort was built once again, in which Jussa Singh played, again, a significant part.

The Territorial Acquisitions

After Muin

Adina's
action

The confusion that followed the death of Muin, offered the best opportunity to the Sikhs to develop their territorial acquisitions. Jussa Singh also took an advantage, and joined by his ally, Jai Singh Kanheya ; he brought the territories north of Amritsar, and those in the neighbourhood of Batala, in his subjection. But he could not continue these activities for long. When Adina Beg became the governor of Punjab under the Marathas, he sent Mir Aziz Bakshi, who hunted down the Sikhs and butchered thousands of them mercilessly. Ram Rauni was besieged once again, among the besieged

1. Latif, p. 306.

being Jussa Singh Ramgarhia and Jai Singh Kanheya. Many Sikhs were slaughtered. Jussa Singh, however, escaped unhurt once again, and this he accomplished with others one night, after having battered down the walls of Ram Rauni. "Those who escaped this slaughter were styled Ramgarhias by their fellow-countrymen, as a compliment to the sacred place where they had sought shelter, and this, more appropriately, gave the *misl* the designation which it bears.¹"

Adina Beg, however, died soon in 1758. The Sikhs came out from their retreats and spread once again whole over the Punjab. Jussa Singh, with the help of the Kanheyas; occupied several places in the districts of Amritsar and Gurdaspur, such as Kalanaur, Batala, Sri Hargovindpur, Kadian and Ghamman. These possessions yielded to him an annual revenue of between six and ten lakhs of rupees.² Just this time, he constructed near Ramgarh at Amritsar, the *Katra bazar*, which still stands as his memorial. After this, Jussa Singh added to his possessions some territories in the neighbourhood of Hoshiarpur. Parganas of Maniwal, Urmar, Tanda, Sarih and Miani in the Jullundur Doab were occupied. And all this brought to him an additional income of about ten lakhs of rupees.

As the contest for occupation of territories between the different *misls* developed, and as almost all the neighbouring territories were occupied by one or the other among them, the Ramgarhia chief now diverted his attention towards the hill territories. He made Raja Ghumand Chand, the ruler of Kangra, his tributary. Prithvi Singh, the ruler of Nurpur, and Raj Singh, the ruler of Chamba, accepted his overlordship. Jussa Singh occupied Dipalpur, Datarpur, Anarpur, Haripur and Jaswan; and now his possessions included almost whole of the hilly country between the Ravi and the Beas, and the vast territories of the Jullunder Doab in the plains. Ramgarh being now no more able to serve the purpose; Sri Hargovindpur, near Batala on the Beas, which was

Jussa
escaped

The
Ramgarhias

Adina died
1758

Jussa's
opportunity

Constructed
Katra bazar

Territories

Income
ten lakhs

Towards
hills

Kangra

Nurpur
Chamba

Dipalpur,
Datarpur,
Anarpur,
Haripur,
Jaswan
J. Doab

1. Latif, p. 307.

2. Gian Singh, *Raj Khalsa*, p. 10.

Batala
capital

situated in the heart of the Ramgarhia territories, was converted by Jussa Singh into his capital. He built several forts at strategic places within his territories ; and extended full protection to his protected states. Chamba was thus protected against Ranjit Deo of Jammu. And Jussa Singh established his reputation as one of the strongest chiefs of the Punjab.

Strongest

Differences
with
Kanhayas

A challenge to the rising power of Jussa Singh Ramgarhia, however, came soon from among the best of his Sikh friends. Jussa Singh had his most cordial relations with the Kanheyas, and they continued to be so till 1763. After that, however, these relations worsened. It is said that the Kanheyas and the Ramgarhias led a joint attack on Kasur. Out of the huge amount of booty that fell into the hands of the allies, Mali Singh, the brother of Jussa Singh, is said to have concealed a valuable part of it against Jussa Singh's wishes. The fact was later discovered by the Kanheyas and thus was the friendship between these two *misls* broken.

At Kasur

A blow

In 1774, Jay Singh Kanheya occupied the fort of Kangra by a stratagem. This was a direct blow on Jussa Singh's supremacy in the hills. He was in search of an opportunity against the Kanheyas, which offered itself soon, when, as already discussed, the widow of Nand Singh, a Bhangi *misl-dar*, gave away Pathankot as *Jagir* to her son-in-law, Tara Singh, the brother of Hakikat Singh Kanheya. Ganda Singh, the Bhangi chief, asked the Kanheyas to return him Pathankot, which he said had been bestowed by his brother, Jhanda Singh, on Nand Singh. Kanheyas rejected the proposal and assisted by Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, they prepared for war. The Ramgarhia chief came to the assistance of Ganda Singh. The enemies met at Dina nagar, but after a few days of indecisive fighting, Ganda Singh was suddenly taken ill, and he died. Jussa Singh Ramgarhia also met an accident, though he escaped unhurt. The Bhangis fled the battle-field. This failure was a further blow on the prestige of the Ramgarhia ; and his enmity with the Kanheyas was now extended to an enmity with Ahluwalias as well.

Battle at
Dina-nagar

Further
blow

Till 1766, Jussa Singh Ramgarhia had friendly relations with Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. They fought together against the internal enemies and the external invaders. In 1764, they co-operated with each other against Ahmad Shah Abdali. In 1766, however, they had some boundary dispute and now the differences between the two developed. In 1767, the two failed to come together against Ahmad Shah Abdali. The gulf between the two widened, and on the question of Pathankot, the two found themselves in the opposing camps. After Ramgarhia's defeat here, he assisted the Rani of Kapurthala against the Ahluwalias, and encouraged her to stop paying tribute to the latter. Here again, however, he failed. Jussa Singh Ramgarhia was wounded with a gun shot of Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, in a battle between the two at Zahura, on the river Beas. The former retaliated, and wounded the latter when he had gone ahunting near Batala. The Ahluwalia chief was taken prisoner by the Ramgarhia chief, but was later released.

Relations
with
Ahluwalias

Differences
in 1767

Pathankot

Kapurthala

Wounded at
Zahura

Ahluwalia
prisoner

As the Ahluwalia Sardar was held in high esteem by the Sikhs ; the Bhangis, the Sukarchakias, and the Kanheyas decided to join him and expel the Ramgarhias from the Punjab.

A Combi-
nation

About the year 1776, Gurbakhsh Singh Kanheya, the son of Jay Singh Kanheya, attacked Batala, which was at the time under the charge of Malla Singh, the brother of Jussa Singh Ramgarhia. Malla Singh was disliked by his own people, who assisted the invader, and Malla Singh fled. Soon after this, the Kanheyas took possession of Kalanaur from Tara Singh. After some time, Jussa Singh recovered Batala, but he failed in recovering Kalanaur. The fight continued, and ultimately the allies were able to drive the Ramgarhias to the other side of the Sutlej. The major portion of their territories was occupied by the Kanheyas.

Kanheyas
took Batala
1776

And
Kalanaur

Ramgarhias
driven out

Thus driven the Ramgarhia chief, however, did not loose his heart. On the other side of the river, he soon collected a large number of irregular horse around him, and assisted by Amar Singh, the Phulkian chief, he established

Other side
of Sutlej

At Hissar himself in the Hissar country. He extended his ravages up
 Into Delhi to the very walls of Delhi. Once he penetrated into Delhi
 itself, and carried off four guns from the Moghul arsenal.
 Meerut The Mirath Nawab agreed to pay him Rs. 10,000 a year
 on his consenting to leave his district unmolested. He
 Hissar sacked Hissar, to punish the governor, who had forcibly
 sacked carried away two daughters of a Brahmin, and had the girls
 restored to their father."

A change The circumstances on this side of the river Sutlej also
 changed soon. Differences soon arose between Maha Singh
 Jussa Sukarchakia and Jai Singh Kanheya. The former invited
 invited the Ramgarhia to his assistance. The two fought against
 the Kanheyas, to the complete discomfiture of the latter.
 Territories And the majority of the Ramgarhia possessions were restored
 restored to them, and Jussa Singh now led a life of peace for several
 years. But after the death of Maha Singh, when his son
 Differences Ranjit Singh succeeded to the chiefship of Sukarchakias, the
 with differences between Ramgarhias and the Sukarchakias
 Ranjit developed again. In 1799 Ranjit Singh occupied
 Lahore ; and Jussa Singh Ramgarhia joined the
 At Bhasin Bhangis and Nizam-ud-din of Kasur, in a coalition
 against him. The two forces met at Bhasin, a village lying
 a few miles east of Lahore. They remained encamped
 before each other for about two months, but neither of them
 dared take initiative against the other. In the meanwhile,
 Gulab Singh Bhangi died suddenly of illness, and his
 friends retired without giving a battle to Ranjit Singh.

Jussa died Jussa Singh died in 1803 ; a daring adventurer who played
 1803 a considerable part in establishing the Sikhs as a political
 Jodh Singh power. After his death, his son, Jodh Singh, succeeded him
 succeeded to the chiefship of the Ramgarhia misl. So long as Jodh Singh
 lived, Ranjit Singh took no step to capture his territories.
 Died 1814 But after his death in 1814, Ranjit Singh occupied the
 Ranjit Ramgarhia territories, offering a good *Jagir* to the descen-
 occupied dants of Jodh Singh.

4. The Kanheya Misl

Founder of this *Misl* was Jay Singh, who belonged to

the *Mauza Kanha*, which lay about 15 miles east of Lahore and from which the *Misl* got its name. Jay Singh was the son of a poor Sindhu *Jat*, named Khushali, and had two brothers, Jhanda Singh and Singha. From his early childhood, Jay Singh showed a brave disposition, and a daring attitude towards life. When he entered into his youth, that was the time by which Kapur Singh had established his reputation as a leader of the Khalsa, and the people craved to be initiated into the Khalsa faith by him. Jay Singh was one of those lucky men who received his *Pahul* from Kapur Singh's hands. After receiving *Pahul*, Jay Singh joined the *Dal Khalsa*, and within a short time, he established his reputation as a man of ambition and an adventurous spirit.

Founder
Jay Singh
of Mauza
Kanha

His life

Joined Dal
Khalsa

During the confusion that followed the death of Muin-ul-Mulk in 1753, and during the repeated invasions of the Durrani from Afghanistan; like several other brave Sikh chiefs of the Punjab, Jay Singh also made the best use of the opportunity that offered itself, and he brought the productive territory of Riarki under his possession. Shortly after this, he also occupied the territories of Mukerian, Hajipur, Pathankot and Gurdaspur. Ahmad Shah Abdali led his sixth invasion of the Punjab in 1762, and in February, the same year, occurred the incident of the *Bara* or the Second *Ghalughara* in which thousands of the Sikhs were killed by the Afghans near Kup. But such was the spirit and enthusiasm of the Sikhs, that the Durrani had not yet left the Punjab when they gathered in a huge number at Amritsar and started their plundering activities once again. Jay Singh played an important part, and joined by some others of his friends, he fell on Kasur in 1763, and carried off a very rich booty.

Opportunity
taken
Riarki

Mukerian,
Hajipur,
Pathankot,
Gurdaspur

Kasur, 1763

It was at Kasur that the Kanheyas developed differences with Jussa Singh Ramgarhia, which developed later into an open clash between the two *misl*s. In 1774, Jay Singh occupied the fort of Kangra. Kangra being under the protection of Jussa Singh Ramgarhia, the latter felt it as a serious blow

Differences
with
Ramgarhias

Kangra

to him. On the question of Pathankot, as we have studied,¹ Jussa Singh Ramgarhia supported the Bhangis against the Kanheyas. But in the battle that was fought at Dina-nagar, the Kanheyas were able to win a victory.

At Dina-
nagar

Relations
with
Ahluwalias

Batala
occupied

Kalanaur

Ramgarhia
territories
occupied

Hill states

Decline

Maha Singh

Plundered
Jammu

Insulted

Shortly after this, the Kanheyas developed closer relations with the Ahluwalias, and with their help, they determined to crush the rising power of the Ramgarhias. About the year 1776, Gurbakhsh Singh Kanheya, the son of Jay Singh Kanheya, attacked Batala, which was at the time under the charge of Malla Singh, the brother of Jussa Singh Ramgarhia. Malla Singh was disliked by his own people, who assisted the invader, and Malla Singh fled. After some time, Jussa Singh recovered Batala, but he failed in recovering Kalanaur, which was now held by Jaymal Singh, the son of Hakikat Singh, a deputy of Jay Singh who had by now died. The fight continued, and ultimately the allies were able to drive the Ramgarhias to the other side of the Sutlej. The major portion of the Ramgarhia territories was occupied by the Kanheyas.

Jay Singh's power thus became paramount in the Punjab. The hill states which were under the Ramgarhia possession, now became tributary to him, and Kot Kangra remained in his possession. Jay Singh, however, was not destined to continue these ambitious activities for long. Soon there was a decline in his fortunes, and his rising power was beaten to a halt.

Jay Singh had taken Maha Singh, the young son and successor of Charat Singh into his care. When Jammu failed to pay its tribute to Jay Singh, he decided to march against it, and invited the assistance of Maha Singh for the purpose. Maha Singh, however, had his own ambition to realise. He secretly marched on Jammu, sacked the city and its surrounding territory, and gathered a huge booty. This enraged Jay Singh, who insulted young Maha Singh, when the latter paid him a visit at Amritsar. The spirit of the youngman was fired,

1. See the account of Ramgarhia Misl.

he called Sansar Chand Kutoch of Kangra who had already suffered at the hands of Jay Singh, to his assistance. Jussa Singh Ramgarhia was also called back from the other side of the river Sutlej and offered a good opportunity to recover his lost territories. The noted Muslim leader of Batala, Gholam Ghous, who had suffered indignities at the hands of Jay Singh was also invited to join. When the intelligence regarding these developments reached Jay Singh, he sent Gurbakhsh Singh Duia across the Sutlej to check the Ramgarhia's advance. In the engagement that took place near Patiala, however, Gurbakhsh Singh was defeated and killed, and Jussa Singh continued his march to join Maha Singh. After several skirmishes, a severe battle was fought at Batala, between the Kanheyas led by Gurbakhsh Singh, the son of Jay Singh on the one side, and Maha Singh joined by the Ramgarhias and others on the other side. Kanheyas were defeated, and Gurbakhsh Singh Kanheya lost his life. At his son's death, Jay Singh "burst into tears, emptied his quiver of its arrows, and, dismounting from his horse, exposed himself to the enemy's fire. Such was the respect for the old veteran that none dared approach him in his grief, and all quietly withdrew. The victorious troops then advanced to Riarki and seized it."¹

Prepared
against
Jay Singh

Gurbakhsh
killed

Battle
of Batala

Son killed

To Riarki

Thus being defeated and humbled, Jay Singh fled to Pathankot, while his daughter-in-law, Sada Kaur, the widow of Gurbakhsh Singh had to escape barefooted to Saiyan. The loss of Batala² proved to be a heavy blow on the Kanheya power, from which they never recovered again. The city was occupied by Jussa Singh, who was now able to acquire all his territories back.

Jay fled

Batala lost

In the meanwhile, the war between Sansar Chand of Kangra and Jay Singh continued on the hills. The former occupied a large territory of Jay Singh, including Mukeria and Hajipur. He also attacked the fort of Atalgarh, which was, however, bravely defended by a slave girl of Jay Singh, and Sansar Chand had to raise the siege. The war, however,

Against
Kangra

1. Latif, p. 311.

2. Lachhi Ram, '*Jang Batala*,' p. 42.

Maha's
friendship
restored

continued for a long time ; till ultimately, Sada Kaur, an ambitious and artful lady, approached Maha Singh the rising star, for the restoration of friendship between the Kanheyas and the Sukerchakias. Sada Kaur's only daughter, Mehtab Kaur, was betrothed to Maha Singh's little son, Ranjit Singh. And thus being strengthened, Sansar Chand was approached by the Kanheyas for a compromise. An arbitrator was appointed, who recommended the restoration of Kot Kangra to Sansar Chand ; and Mukeria and Hajipur to Jay Singh. Sansar Chand also entered into an agreement to help the Kanheyas against the Ramgarhias in the case of a war.

Compro-
mise with
Sansar

Failed at
Batala

Shortly after deciding this dispute, Jay Singh, now helped by Maha Singh and Sansar Chand, attacked Batala. The city was besieged, but even a continuous effort of the allies for twenty-one days to reduce the city, failed. Jussa Singh Ramgarhia had fortified it perfectly and made a due arrangement for its defence. Jay Singh was obliged to raise the siege, and Batala now remained in an undisturbed possession of the Ramgarhia chief.

Friendship
with
Maha Singh

Died 1798

The friendship between Jay Singh and Maha Singh now continued undisturbed. The latter died in 1792, resulting in utter grief to the former. And six years after this, in 1798, according to Latif, Jay Singh himself departed from this mortal world.¹

Sada Kaur
succeeded

Her
ambition

Jay Singh was survived by his two sons, Nidhan Singh and Bhag Singh. But neither of them was fit enough to succeed to the Kanheya chiefship. Sada Kaur was, therefore, left alone to lead the 8,000 soldiers of her misl, and to do as best as she could. Maha Singh, at his death-bed, had handed over the charge of his young son Ranjit Singh to Sada Kaur. Sada Kaur being an ambitious lady, her plan was to make her son-in-law as her stepping stone, and by uniting the strength and resources of the two *misl*s, to carve out for herself a kingdom. But in this, Ranjit Singh proved to be more than a match for her, "and as the future history was to show, she

1. It seems wrong that Jay Singh died as late as in 1798. Although no exact date can be forwarded it seems definite that he should have died much earlier, even before Maha Singh's death.

herself played precisely the same role, as she had designed for the son of Maha Singh." Sada Kaur rendered a considerable help to Ranjit Singh in the development of his power. But in 1823, serious differences developed between the two. Ranjit Singh occupied the Kanheya territories. Sada Kaur died in 1832. And thus ends the history of the Kanheya *misl*.

But failed

Died 1832
Ended
Kanheya

5. The Fyzulpuria Misl

The Fyzulpuria *misl* was founded by Kapur Singh, whose life and career have already been discussed in detail.¹ The *misl* got its name from Fyzullapur, the village which Kapur Singh wrested from its Muslim chief named Fyzullah. After occupying this village, Kapur Singh named it as Singh-pura, after which the *misl* founded by him was also sometimes known as Singhpuria. Kapur Singh, was a man of daring habits, and an humble attitude towards life. It did not take him long to become popular among the Sikhs. In 1833, he received the title of Nawab on behalf of the Khalsa, from the Lahore governor. And shortly after this, he organised the Sikhs into the *Dal Khalsa*. Till 1748, Kapur Singh continued to be the supreme leader of both the *Budha* as well as the *Taruna Dals*. And during this period, when for the first time, after the death of Guru Gobind Singh, the Sikh community was left to its own resources to raise a leader from among themselves, Kapur Singh being acknowledged as the indisputable leader of the Khalsa, led the Sikhs through one of the very dark periods of their history. The oppressive rule of the Lahore governors, and their policy of destroying the Khalsa nation from its very root, a chain of foreign invasions and internal troubles. All these were the problems which the Sikhs had to face. And Kapur Singh led them from one success to another, till ultimately the Sikhs were established as a power to be reckoned with. In 1748, having grown old, Kapur Singh handed over the leadership of the Khalsa to Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. Still, however,

Founder
Kapur
Singh
Name

Singhpuria

A Nawab,
1833

Leader till
1748

Established
Sikhs

1. See Chapter XXII of this book.

he continued playing a very active part in their organisation, till he died in 1753.

Died 1753

His territories

Khushal Singh succeeded

His success

The territories of Kapur Singh lay on the east and the west of the river Sutlej. He having died issueless, the leadership of his *misl* descended to Khushal Singh, his nephew, who also played a significant role in the Sikh history, and expanded his territories on both the banks of the river Sutlej. The most important of the possessions of Khushal Singh were Patti, Bharatgarh, Nurpur, Bahrapur and Jullundur. It was he whose follower shot Nawab Zain Khan, in 1763, to death, yielding to the Khalsa a complete victory over Sarhind. This victory opened a broad career before the Sikhs, and they spread whole over the Punjab, destroying their enemies, and developing their territorial acquisitions. Khushal Singh also occupied Ludhiana, though he had to divide the district of Banor with Patiala. He died in 1795, leaving behind him his *misl* stronger than ever it was, and with territorial possessions far larger than those he had inherited.

Died 1795

Budh Singh succeeded

Lost west of Sutlej

Died 1816

Khushal Singh was succeeded by his son Budh Singh. But the latter could not equal his father in talent and bravery. The Fyzulpuria *misl* began to decline, and ultimately all its possessions on the west of the Sutlej were annexed by the rising star, Ranjit Singh. On his possessions on the east of Sutlej, however, the British protection was extended. And he continued enjoying there, the fruits of the victories of his father and his father's uncle, till he died in 1816:

6. The Nishanwala Misl

Standard-bearers

Sangat and Mohar originated

Exploits

Nishan means a standard, and the founders of the Nishanwala *misl* were the standard-bearers of the *Dal Khalsa*—when both the *Budha* and the *Taruna Dals* came together for the purpose of a military deed. The *misl* originated with two *Jats*, named Sangat Singh and Mohar Singh. When the Mughal authority in the Punjab died down, and when the Durrani invasions were rolled back by the Sikhs, the two leaders of this *misl* carried their exploits across the river Sutlej and sacked the country far and wide. They once

even pillaged Meerut from where enormous booty fell into their hands. The number of soldiers in their command increased to 12,000 ; and the territory occupied by them included the town of Ambala, which was their pride-possession.

Strength
12,000

After the death of Sangat Singh, Mohar Singh succeeded to the leadership of the *misl*. But when Ranjit Singh established his power on this side of the river Sutlej, he sent his *Dewan*, Mohkam Chand across the river to reduce the Nishanwala territories to his submission. The Nishanwala possessions were thus sacked and their treasures and other belongings came under the Maharaja's possession. The Amritsar Treaty of 1809 fixed the Sutlej as the boundary line between the territories of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and those in the submission of the British. As a result of this, only Shahbad, which belonged to a subordinate chief of the *misl*, remained as a distinct unit under the protection of the British ; the rest of the territories, including Ambala, lapsing to the British government. And thus did the *misl* suffer its death.

Mohar
Singh

Its decline

And death

7. The Shahid Misl

The *Shahids* "were rather religious than a military body, though the priests fought in those days as well as the laymen. The Khalsa was the true embodiment of the church militant. The founder of the Shahid *misl* was Sudda Singh, the *muhant* or head of the shrine at Talwandi, where Guru Govind Singh had made his resting-place (Damdama). He was killed fighting against the Muhammedan governor of Jalandhar, and his head having been struck off he is reported to have ridden some distance and killed several of the enemy before he fell from his horse. Hence he was known as the martyr (Shahid), and his followers took his name."¹

Sudda
Singh
founder

Headless
fight

The members of this *misl* were generally *Akalis*, or immortals, a class of devotees founded by Guru Gobind Singh, who wore "blue chequered clothes, put bangles of steel round their wrists, and a circular, sharpened, bright

Akali
members

1. Griffin, Ranjit Singh. p. 82.

Their
conduct

sword round their head.”¹ These Akalis were supposed to be the censors of the public morals. Their leaders were Karam Singh and Gurbaksh Singh, and their possessions lay about Rania, Khari and Jaroli. These Akalis, according to Griffin, used to join themselves to others rather than fight on their own account. Yet these Akalis played a very important part in establishing the Sikh power, both before and under Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Europeans
about them

Griffin says

Steinbach
and Latif

Their real
character

Most of the European and the Muslim writers do not have very good words regarding these Akalis ; and Griffin himself writes at one place : “though little better than drunken savages, they were supposed by the Sikhs to possess a semi-sacred character, and were, moreover, useful when desperate deeds were to be done which the rank and file of the army might have declined.....they were identical in character and in the manner of their onslaught with the Ghazis of Afghanistan and the Soudan, whose fierce and terrible attack shakes the nerves of all but the steadiest and most seasoned troops ; but the Sikh soldiers of God drew their courage more from drink and maddening drugs, than from the depths of religious enthusiasm which inspires the wild children of Islam.”² Steinbach³ and Latif⁴ too forward similar views regarding these Akalis. But all these writers seem to have failed in understanding the real character of the Akalis. Though the *Bhang* may have been a weakness with the Akalis, yet they, among the Sikhs, were the moralists, who kept the faith of the Khalsa alive during the darkest periods of its history. Wherever these Akali's fought, they fought less for a material gain or a worldly honour and more for a cause ; and but for them, it should have been more difficult for the Sikhs to give a death blow to the Mughals in the Punjab, and to send the Durrani's back weeping aloud for their failure to establish their rule in

1. Latif, pp. 324-25

2. Griffin, pp. 136-137.

3. Steinbach, the Punjab, p. 104.

4. Latif, p. 324.

this country. Under Ranjit Singh too, the Akalis won for the Maharaja many a difficult battle, and thus paved the way for the unification of the Punjab.

8. The Dulewala Misl

The founder of this *misl* was one Golaba, who after receiving the *Pahul*, became Golab Singh. The *misl* got its name from Golab Singh's village, which was known as Dalewal, and it held a "great portion of the upper Jalandhar Doab and the northern portions of Ambala and Ludhiana, with some estates in Firozpur."¹ After the death of Golab Singh, his chief associate, Tara Singh *Gheba*,² succeeded to the chiefship of the *misl*. So long as Tara Singh lived, very friendly relations continued between him and Ranjit Singh. Tara Singh is also said to have helped the latter in many of his expeditions. He accompanied the Lahore force at the time of its attack on Naraingarh, in 1807, during which he died. And according to Cunningham, "Ranjit Singh hastened back to secure his possessions in the Jullundur Doab. The widow of the aged leader equalled the sister of the Raja of Patiala in spirit, and she is described to have girded up her garments, and to have fought, sword in hand, on the battered walls of the fort of Rahon."³ Nothing could, however, stop the Maharaja from annexing the Dalewala territories.

Founder
Golaba

V. Dalewal

Tara Singh
succeeded

Friendship
with Ranjit

Died. 1807

Annexed

9. The Nakai Misl

The *misl* was founded by Hira Singh, a Sandhu *Jat*, the son of Chaudhri Hemraj, who belonged to the *mauza* Bharwal of the Lahore district. Hira Singh is said to have led his childhood in utter poverty, but later on when he got himself initiated into the Khalsa faith, he started carrying on his exploits in the neighbouring territories, and soon became a man of means. The number of his followers increased to two thousand horsemen with camel-swivels and a few guns. The Nakais inhabited the country known as Nakka country

Founder
Hira Singh

From
Nakka
country

1. Griffin, p. 82.

2. From the ingenious manner in which he conveyed his flocks across the mountain glens, Latif, p. 321.

3. History of the Sikhs, p. 136.

Misl
territory

Successor
Nahr Singh

Killed, 1768

Successor
Ran Singh

Died, 1781

Bhagwan
Singh
succeeded

Sister to
Ranjit

Gian Singh

Kahn Singh

Ranjit
annexed

which lay between Lahore and Gogaira in the direction of Multan, and from which the *misl* got its name. The territory of the *misl*, which included Gogaira, Kasur and Sharakpur, brought an annual revenue of nine lakhs of rupees. Hira Singh was killed during his attack on Pakpattan, which was held at the time by Shekh Subhan; and his son, Dal Singh being minor, he was succeeded by his nephew Nahr Singh. The latter, however, could rule the *misl* only for a short time, and was killed soon, in 1768, during a fight at Kot Kamalia.

Nahr Singh was succeeded by his younger brother, Ran Singh. It was during his time that the *misl* reached the climax of its power. Kumar Singh of Sayadwala was subdued by Ran Singh, and he died in 1781, to be succeeded by his eldest son, Bhagwan Singh. Bhagwan Singh married his sister, Raj Kaur, to Ranjit Singh, and thus developed his power and reputation. But he was soon killed in an action with Wazir Singh, the brother of Kumar Singh, who recovered Sayadwala from the Nakais. Dal Singh, the son of Hira Singh, attacked Sayadwala, and killed Wazir Singh, to avenge the death of Bhagwan Singh, though shortly after this, he himself was assassinated by a Wazir Singh's man.

Bhagwan Singh was succeeded by his brother Gian Singh, who died in 1807, to be succeeded by his son Kahn Singh. By this time Ranjit Singh had established himself in the Punjab. He attacked and annexed the Nakai territories, leaving to Kahn Singh a lavish *Jagir* worth fifteen thousand rupees a year.

10. The Karora Singhi Misl

Karora
Singh
founder

V. Panj-
garhia

Possessions

Bhagel
Singh

The Karora Singhis took their name from Karora Singh, the founder of this *misl*. Karora Singh belonged to the village, *Panjgarhia*, and the *misl* was also sometimes known as *Panjgarhia misl*. The possessions of the *misl* lay mainly between the Jumna and the Makanda rivers. Among the principal members of the *misl* was the powerful family of Kalsia. When Karora Singh died without leaving a son, he was succeeded by Bhagel Singh, who made Chiloundi, about

twenty miles from Karnal, his head-quarters ; and after the fall of Sarhind, and the assassination of its governor, Zain Khan, he expanded his territories on the east of the Sutlej. He raised the number of soldiers in his command to 12,000, and made himself as one of the most daring of the Sikh chiefs.

Strength
12,000

Bhagel Singh, however, was concerned more with retaining his own power, than with the general independence of the Sikhs. In 1778, the Sikhs sacked Sarhind and the Malwa country far and wide. And when, the Delhi emperor, Shah Alam, sent a large army under the command of Prince Jawan Bakht, to punish the Sikhs, the Karora Singhis and the representative of the Kalsia family, both joined the imperial force and fought against the Sikhs. Later, in 1788, when the Maratha chief Amba Rao, joined by the Rohilla chief, Gholam Kadar, marched into the Punjab ; Bhagel Singh was the first Sikh chief who made his submission to him, and supported him faithfully in his exploits.

Joined
Jawan
Bakht

And
Marathas

After Bhagel Singh's death, Jodh Singh succeeded to the chiefship of the *misl*. Jodh Singh was the son of Gurbakhsh Singh, the founder of the Kalsia family, and a close friend of Bhagel Singh. Jodh Singh was a capable leader, who expanded his territories yet further, and added to his possessions Bassi, Dera, Achrak and Lotab. Sahib Singh of Patiala had to save his territories from Jodh Singh, by giving his daughter to Hari Singh, the son of Jodh Singh. The marriage is said to have been solemnised in 1803. Jodh Singh had friendly relations with Ranjit Singh, and rendered him a valuable service in his siege of Naraingarh, in 1807 ; and at the time of the annexation of Multan. Shortly after Ranjit Singh's conquest of Multan, Jodh Singh died, and the territories of the Karora Singhi *misl* were absorbed by the Kalsia family, which continued to be an important chiefship under the protection of the British, on the east of the Sutlej.

Jodh Singh

Expanded

Took
Sahib's
daughter

Friendship
with Ranjit

Absorbed
by Kalsia

11. The Sukerchakia Misl

The Sukerchakia *misl* got its name from the village

V. Sukarchak	Sukerchak, where Budda, the son of Bara lived. Bara was a man of means, and was the owner of about half of this village. When he died in 1679 he left a dying injunction for his son Budda, who was at the time only nine years of age, that he should proceed to Amritsar, and receive <i>Pahul</i> . When Budda attained the age of discretion, ¹ he did act on his father's injunction, and is said to be one of those lucky men, who received <i>Pahul</i> from the hands of Guru Gobind Singh.
Bara	
Budda	"He was, however, not a man of peaceful disposition as his father and grand-father had been, but was courageous, enterprising and sagacious." ² When Budda received baptism, his name was converted into Budh Singh. Singh means a lion and in his courage and spirit, Budh Singh was actually no less than a lion. On his body, Budh Singh had as many as forty scars of swords, spears and bullets. ³ Budh Singh "was good humoured, ready witted and merciful to the oppressed.....He died of apoplexy in 1716. His wife, overwhelmed with grief at his death ran a sword through her heart. The bodies of husband and wife were burnt together." ⁴
<i>Pahul</i> from Guru Gobind Singh	
Brave man	
Died, 1716	
Nodh Singh	After Budh Singh, his son Nodh Singh succeeded to the inheritance of his father. He married the daughter of a wealthy land lord of Majitha, and as his importance and power increased, he built in his village Sukerchak, a big house of the shape of a small fortress. Soon after this, Nodh Singh raised a band of 30 horse-men, and thus laid the foundation of the greatness of his house. As his power increased, he spread the field of his exploits, and was dreaded from the banks of the Sutlej to Rawalpindi. He joined the Fyzulpuria <i>misl</i> of Nawab Kapur Singh, and at the time of the first invasion of the Punjab by Ahmad Shah Abdali, "by plundering the baggage and the stragglers of the invading army, enriched himself and his associates." ⁵ In 1747, Nodh
Band of 30	
Joined Fyzulpuria	

1. See Gordon, *The Sikhs*, p. 80.

2. Latif, p. 337.

3. See Lepel Griffin, *The Punjab Chiefs*, i, p. 220.

4. Latif, p. 337.

5. Ibid.

Singh received a gun shot wound in the head, in a fight with some Afghans, of which five years afterwards, in 1752, he died leaving behind four sons. Charat Singh, Dal Singh, Chet Singh and Mangi Singh.

Died, 1752

Charat Singh succeeded to the Sukerchakia patrimony after the death of his father. Payne writes about him : a brave "Jat Sardar, who repeatedly distinguished himself in the early struggles with Ahmad Shah."¹ Charat Singh was more ambitious than his father and grand-father had been. He soon separated himself from the Fyzulpuria *misl* of Nawab Kapur Singh, and raised his strength to 150 horse-men. He took forcible possession of some villages, united with another successful leader like himself, and formed a *misl*, of which he became the active chief, calling it after the name of his native village, Sukerchak.² It is said to have been a standing rule with him, that no one would be admitted to the membership of his *misl* unless he received *Pahul*.³ As his power developed, Charat Singh married the daughter of Amir Singh of Gujranwala another brave and famous leader and man of means, with whose help Charat Singh had been carrying on his exploits. And after this, he transferred his head-quarters to Gujranwala. Amir Singh's depredations extended from the banks of the river Jhelum to the very walls of Delhi, and he "having acquired large territorial possessions in Gujranwala,..... was looked upon as the chief man of the district...." Charat Singh's marriage-tie with him "united the wealth of the two Sardars," and these chiefs under one banner, headed the confederacy, though Amir Singh, on account of his age, was never able to take a prominent part in its affairs."⁴

Charat Singh

Separated
Raised to
150

Misl
formed

A rule

Married
daughter
of Amir
Singh

Streng-
thened

About this time, a Mughal *Faujdar* ruled at Emnabad, who was a man of very harsh nature, and against whose hateful activities, the Hindus of the locality often

1. Payne, A Short History of the Sikhs, pp. 66-67.
2. Gordon, p. 81.
3. Kanheya Lal, *Twarikh-i-Punjab*, p. 119.
4. Latif, p. 338.

- Emnabad attacked, 1761
- Victorious
- A fort at Gujranwala
- Ubed Lahore governor defeated
- Other victories
- Jealousy
- Marched on Jammu, 1774
- complained to Charat Singh. In the summer of 1761, when Chart Singh received these complaints again, he collected his horsemen, and surrounded the fortress of Emnabad. The battle started, but before the fight could prolong, Charat Singh fell upon the *Faujdar* with ten selected horsemen, and cut him to pieces. After this an enormous booty and munitions from the *Faujdar's* aresnal fell to Charat Singh's hands with which he retired beating the drums of victory.
- This victory of Charat Singh spread his reputation far and wide. In the same year of his victory, Charat Singh built a mud fort at Gujranwala, in place of the *Katchi Sarae* that he possessed. Khwaja Ubed, the Lahore governor had for some time been feeling restive at the rising power of this young chief, and marched at the head of a strong force to attack Gujranwala. Charat Singh had foreseen this development, and had therefore already made his preparations. In the battle that followed, Charat Singh's forces completely routed the invading army, and Khwaja Ubed had only a narrow escape with his life, and he fled leaving his "military stores and ammunition in the hands of the enemy."
- Charat Singh plundered Abdali's camp in 1762, and soon after his retreat, he captured Ahmadabad, Wazirabad, Rohtas, Dhanni, Chakwal, Pind Dadan Khan, Jalalpur, Kot Sahib Singh and Raja-ka-kot etc. These victories of Charat Singh aroused the jealousy of the other Sikh *misls*. And the Bhangis, especially, began to plan his destruction.
- Charat Singh had to march on Jammu in 1774. Ranjit Deo, the ruler of this state wanted to deprive his eldest son Brij Raj Deo from succession after his death, in favour of Mian Dalel Singh, his youngest son. Brij Raj rebelled against his father, and Charat Singh espoused his cause. Ranjit Deo requested the Bhangis for help, and Jhanda Singh Bhangi joined him soon for the purpose. Chamba, Kangra and Nurpur also joined Ranjit Deo. On the other hand, Kanheyas under Sardar Jay Singh came to the assistance of the Sukerchakias. The rival armies encamped on the Basanti river within a few miles of each other, and the preparations

for the battle were being made, when Charat Singh was killed by the bursting of a matchlock in the hands of his own man. Had this event not been followed on the next day, by the assassination of the Bhangi chief, Jhanda Singh, it would probably have given the victory to Ranjit Deo. These events brought about the cessation of hostilities, and the Sikh forces withdrew to their respective territories, leaving Ranjit Deo and his sons to settle their dispute among themselves as best as they could.¹

Killed accidentally

Charat Singh died in 1774, leaving behind a large territory to his young son Maha Singh, then only ten years old.² Maha Singh's mother Desan took the charge of the *misl* during his minority. Sikh "ladies played an important part in the history of these warlike times" and *mai* Desan "ruled with vigour and diplomacy."³ In 1780 it was that Maha Singh cut his "leading-strings and took the field at the head of his *misl*, to follow in his father's victorious steps."⁴ Maha Singh had married Raj Kaur—the daughter of Gajpat Singh of Jind, who in 1780, bore him a son, our famous Maharaja, Ranjit Singh.

Maha Singh

Major, 1780

Ranjit born 1780

The first exploit of Maha Singh was against Pir Mohammed, the ruler of the Chattas tribe on the eastern bank of the river Chenab, who was supposed to be a sworn enemy of the Hindus. Assisted by Jai Singh Kanheya, Maha Singh marched at the head of 6,000 troops, and besieged Rassul Nagar. Ultimately Pir Muhammed surrendered himself along with his family, and his territory was occupied. Maha Singh appointed Dal Singh, a lieutenant of his, as the governor of the place, and came back beating the drum of victory. Maha Singh's reputation spread, and many chiefs who had

Victory against Chattas

1. Payne, p. 67.

2. See Cunningham, 'History of the Sikhs'; Forster, 'Travels,' i, p. 288; Moorcroft, 'Travels,' p. 127; Latif, p. 344. It is wrong, as M'Gregor suggests (History of the Sikhs, i, p. 150) that Maha Singh was born in 1760.

3. Gordon, p. 81.

4. Ibid, pp. 82-83.

been dependents of the Bhangi *misl*, began to transfer their allegiance to him.

Attacked
Bhangi
territories

Soon after this, when the Bhangi power was weakened as a result of the invasion of Timur Shah, the son of Ahmad Shah, Maha Singh took advantage of the position. He pillaged Pindi Bhattian, attacked Sahiwal, sacked Jhang, and captured Isa Khel and Musa Khel. Desa Singh Bhangi having failed to protect these territories, he invited his brother-in-law, Sahib Singh Bhangi, for his help. Before, however, Sahib Singh could come to Desa Singh's rescue, he fell out with his own younger brother Sukha Singh, and became rather pliant to Maha Singh, to secure his help. And thus, Maha Singh escaped a trouble at the Bhangi hands.

Kotli

To Jammu

After this, Maha Singh fell on Kotli, in the neighbourhood of Sialkot, and realised a heavy indemnity from its inhabitants. After this he marched towards Jammu. Ranjit Deo had died, and after him, his eldest son Brij Deo succeeded to power, who put his younger brother, Mian Dalel Singh, behind the bars. Brij Deo, however, proved to be a weak and an inefficient ruler. Kanheyas and the Bhangis took an advantage of the position, and they occupied some of the Jammu territories. Brij Deo appealed to Maha Singh for help, who eagerly welcomed the chance, and marched at the head of his troops towards Jammu. According to Payne, however, the powerful combination of his enemies "was more than Maha Singh could withstand: his forces were defeated, while Brij Raj was compelled to pay tribute to the victorious *misls*."¹

Defeated

An opportunity

Maha Singh, however, got his chance only six months after this incident, when Brij Raj refused to pay his tribute to the Kanheyas. Kanheyas this time invited Maha Singh to join them in raiding Jammu. Forgetting his pledge of friendship with the Jammu ruler, Maha Singh willingly availed of this opportunity, with an eye on the riches of Jammu. He, however, deceived Hakikat Singh Kanheya,

1. Payne p. 68.

who was to accompany him in his march on Jammu ; and without informing him, made haste, and fell upon that town. The town was thoroughly sacked, and the surrounding villages plundered. Hakikat Singh died shortly after this, perhaps out of grief.

Sacked
Jammu

Jay Singh, the veteran Kanheya chief, who had taken Maha Singh under his protection, when he was yet a child ; and who had rendered him a considerable assistance in the consolidation of his territories, and in making several new conquests, felt enraged. When Maha Singh approached Jay Singh with sweetmeats at Amritsar, on the Dewali of 1784, he was insulted by the Kanheya chief with the words : "Go away, you Bhagtia (dancing boy) ; I do not want to hear your sentimental talk." "This was too much to be borne in silence by so haughty and impervious a young chief as Maha Singh was."¹

Jay Singh's
enmity

Maha Singh
insulted

The spirit of Maha Singh was fired. He went away, and invited Jussa Singh Ramgarhia who had been driven away by the Kanheyas across the Sutlej. The help of Sansar Chand Kutoch of Kangra, another enemy of the Kanheyas, was also easily secured ; and the combined armies of these three chiefs marched against the Kanheyas. The battle was fought at Batala, where Gurbakhsh Singh Kanheya, the eldest of Jay Singh's sons was killed ; the Kanheyas were completely routed ; and thus, the spirit of the old man was effectually humbled by this double sorrow. The Ramgarhias and Sansar Chand secured their territories from the Kanheya possession. Jay Singh prepared to have yet another trial with Maha Singh. A small action was fought at Naushera, but here again, Jay Singh had to face a discomfiture.

Prepared
against Jay
Singh

Battle at
Batala

Jay Singh
humbled

After this, Sada Kaur, the widow of Gurbakhsh Singh Kanheya, and a very prudent and a sagacious lady, proposed the betrothal of her only daughter, Mehtab Kaur, to Ranjit Singh, the young son of Maha Singh. The alliance was struck, and thus the peace between the Sukerchakias and

Matrimo-
nial
alliance

Fortunate
for Ranjit

the Kanheyas was restored. This alliance proved very fortunate for Ranjit Singh, in his future conquests and consolidation of the Punjab under his standard of monarchy.

Attacked
Gujrat

In 1792, a dispute arose between the two Bhangi brothers, Sahib Singh and Fateh Singh, regarding succession to the estate of their father Gujar Singh, who had died. Maha Singh supported Fateh Singh, and marched on Gujrat, the town held by Sahib Singh. The Sodhra fort was besieged, and the blockade continued for three months. The victory was within sight, when unfortunately, Maha Singh was suddenly taken ill. As his illness became serious, he was removed to Gujranwala and the siege was raised. Shortly after this, in 1792, Maha Singh died.

Died, 1792

The legacy

Maha Singh died young, at the age of only twenty seven summers. And he "left to his son and successor a state beset by danger ; but he bequeathed to him at the same time the qualities by which dangers are best over-come — courage combined with a natural genius for command, and enterprise tempered by prudence and foresight."¹

Ranjit
Singh

After this Ranjit Singh succeeded to the chiefship of the Sukerchakia misl, who was bound to prove a hero among leaders, and a lion among soldiers. Only seven years after the death of his father, this young chief occupied Lahore ; and set his *misl* on the road towards the glory of a consolidated kingdom of the Punjab, and an empire of the Khalsa, which was bound to go down in the Punjab history, as an era of independence, pride and magnificence.

To glory

12. The Phulkian Misl

Guru Har
Rai helped
in laying
foundation

We have already studied how *Guru Har Rai*, the seventh Sikh *Guru* laid the foundation of the Phulkian *misl*.² It is said that once when during his preaching tours, *Guru Har Rai* visited Malwa, two brothers, Kala and Karam Chand of *Mauza Marhaj* came to him and complained that the people of the Kaura tribe did not permit them to live in peace.

1. Payne, pp. 69-70.

2. Chapter xiii of this book.

Thereupon, the Guru sent for Jait Pirana, the leader of the Kaura tribe, and tried to induce him to give the brothers some land for their maintenance. But when he failed in this, the Guru helped the brothers to occupy some land forcibly, and in the fight that followed, Jait Pirana was killed.

Jait Piran
killed

So long as the Guru stayed in the Malwa, Kala and his friends frequently waited on him. Once during his visit, Kala took his two nephews, Phul and Sandali, the sons of Rup Chand to the Guru. Phul was hungry at the time, and out of compassion for the fatherless child, the Guru blessed him saying that he would become a great, famous and wealthy man. This prophecy proved correct.

Phul
blessed

Phul, the second son of Rup Chand, by his wife, Mai Umbi, according to Latif, was "thirtieth in descent from Jesal, the founder of the family, and the state and city of Jesalmir, in Rajputana, who, like almost all *Jats*, was a Bhatti Rajput."¹ When Phul came of age, he developed his influence, and expanded his landed property. Five miles from Marhaj, where he had been born, he founded a village which he called 'Phul' after his own name. As he developed his influence, he had to fight with Hayat Khan, the Bhati chief of Bhatner, whom he defeated at Phakarsar in Bhatinda. Soon after this, however, he himself was defeated by Isa Khan, of the Isa Khan village, who had been assisted by Hussein Khan of Kasur. The Phul village was sacked, and Phul had to flee from here to Marhaj. It was not long before, however, Phul gathered his strength once again, and recovered the village 'Phul'. He also defeated once again, Hayat Khan, the ruler of Bhatner; and shortly after this, increased his power to such an extent that even the Imperial governor of Jagraon was defeated by him and taken prisoner.

Phul

From Jesal

Born

V. Phul

Defeated
Bhati

Phul
sacked

Recovered

Increased
power

Phul, according to Latif, was taken prisoner by the Sarhind governor for his default in the payment of revenue, in whose custody, he feigned death by suspending his breath. His body was delivered to his relatives, but his wife who

Prisoner
at Sarhind

knew Phul's secret, being absent, his body was cremated, and thus Phul died in 1652. While we may not say much regarding the circumstances leading to Phul's death, it seems difficult to believe Latif¹ that he died in 1652, when he was in the seventieth year of his age. If it is agreed that Phul was blessed by Guru Har Rai, when he was a mere boy; and if we are sure that the Guru remained in his office from 1645 to 1661 — in which there seems no doubt; either Phul should not have died in 1652, or he should not have been seventy when he died.

His death

Seven sons

Phulkia
family

Be that as it may, Phul left behind him seven sons, who founded the different Phulkia families, called so after the name of Phul. The more important of these families were those of Patiala, Nabha and Jind.

Rama
succeeded

After Phul, his second son, Rama, succeeded to the chiefship. Rama continued his service to his contemporary Sikh Guru, Gobind Singh, and added yet further to his power and prestige. The chief victims of his rising ambition were, Hassan Khan, the Chief of the Bhatti tribe, and the territories of Kot and Isa Khan; which he plundered and gathered an immense booty. Rama died in 1714, as a result of his assassination at the hands of one of his own followers; and was succeeded by his third son, who is popularly known in the Punjab history as Ala Singh.

Bhatti,
Kot, Isa
Khan

Died 1714

The Patiala House — A

Ala Singh

Ala Singh was born in 1695, and it was this man, sagacious, brave and prudent, who founded the house of Patiala. The most important of his victories was the one he obtained in 1731, against the combined forces of Nawab Asad Ali Khan, the faujdar of the Jullundur Doab, Jamal Khan of Malerkotla, and the Rai of Kot. In the battle that was fought, Asad Ali Khan was killed. This victory of Ala Singh spread the awe of his arms far and wide. He repaired Barnala, and established his head-quarters at the place. His reputation among the Sikhs developed, and they began to

Victory
1731

1. Latif, pp. 323-24.

join him in large numbers. The reputation of Ala Singh reached even the imperial capital, Delhi, and Muhamad Shah, the Delhi Emperor was obliged to ask Ala Singh to assist in the management of Sarhind, promising in return, the title of *raja* to him.

Reputation
at Delhi

Ala Singh continued expanding his territories on the east of the river Sutlej. He plundered the Bhatti territories several times, and in 1749, he built himself a fort at Bhawanigarh. His brother-in-law, Gurbux Singh, conquered for him the district of Sanawar, which included among its eighty-four villages, the village Patiala. Here at Patiala, Ala Singh built in 1757, a mud fort, *Sodhion ki Garhi*, which later became the capital of the Patiala house. In the same year, he conquered major part of the territory of Samana; and also gave another crushing defeat to the Bhattis, who gathered once again to have a trial with him.

Bhatti
plundered
Fort

Got Patiala.

In 1762, Ahmad Shah Abdali led his sixth invasion into the Punjab, to chastise the Sikhs, who had spread their terrorizing activities whole over the Punjab. He inflicted upon the Sikhs a signal defeat, in which thousands of them were killed. Ahmad Shah Abdali continued his pursuit of the Sikhs upto Barnala, 25 miles from Kup. Barnala, as referred above, was the capital of Ala Singh, who kept neutral in Abdali's fight against the Sikhs. When Ahmad Shah reached Barnala, he naturally expected that Ala Singh would come and pay him a homage. But Ala Singh was hanging between two fires, and was anxious not to pay the homage, lest he invited the wrath of his community, thousands of whom had been massacred at the Durrani's hands. Abdali was inclined to take a lenient view of the matter, but his jealous neighbours, the Nawab of Malerkotla, the Rai of Raikot and Lachhmi Narayan, the Dewan of Zain Khan, the Governor of Sarhind, misrepresented Ala Singh before him, declaring that he had given a secret help to the Sikhs.

Durrani.
1762

Reached
Barnala

Ahmad Shah, consequently, stormed the fort of Barnala, and plundered its surrounding territory. Ala Singh, however, slipped away, and later on sought the help of Najib-ud-daulah, to int-

Stormed it

Ala
surrendered

ercede with the Shah in his behalf. As a result of this, he surrendered himself to the Shah, who ordered to have his hair cut. Without, however, being dismayed, Ala Singh, offered to pay a price for his hair. The bargain was struck at one lakh and twenty-five thousand rupees, by paying which Ala Singh saved his hair. He paid an additional sum of five lakh rupees, and secured his release with the promise to pay the Shah an annual tribute. The Shah embraced Ala Singh, and conferred on him a dress of honour. A *firman* was addressed by Shah Wali Khan, the Shah's *Wazir*, to Zen Khan, the Governor of Sarhind, asking him to respect Ala Singh's independence. During his next invasion of the Punjab, in 1764, the Durrani conferred on Ala Singh the title of *raja*, and created him the lessee also of the Sarhind province ; for which Ala Singh agreed to pay the Shah an annual revenue of 3½ lakhs of rupees.

Hair saved

Honoured

Lessee of
Sarhind

Diplomatic

Ala died,
1765

Amar Singh
succeeded

Durrani
conferred
title

Expanded

There was a diplomatic move in the Shah's handing over the charge of Sarhind to Ala Singh. The younger two sons of Guru Gobind Singh having been bricked alive at Sarhind, the Sikhs had a particular grievance against this town, and they were determined to destroy it as often as it was reconstructed. The Shah believed that Ala Singh would be able to keep it in his behalf, and saved it in future from destruction. But his hopes were belied. Ala Singh died in 1765.

After Ala Singh, his grandson, Amar Singh succeeded, and he also continued friendly relations with the Durrani chief. During Ahmad Shah's last invasion in 1767, Amar Singh met the Shah at Kara Bowana, about twenty-four miles south of Ambala, and presented him with one lakh of rupees as *nazrana*. The Shah conferred upon him the title of *Raja-i-Rajgan Bahadur*, and permitted him to strike a coin in his name.

Amar Singh expanded his territories yet further. He attacked successfully Kot Kapura and Mani Majra. Jamal Khan, the Afghan chief of Malerkotla was killed by him in a battle. He captured Sirsa and Fattehabad, and seized the fort of Sefabad, which lay in the north of Patiala. He

repulsed the Imperial troops, sacked Faridkot and seized Bhatinda after defeating its chief, Sukh Chen. He died in 1781, to be succeeded by his own son Sahib Singh. For a few years, the State of Patiala had to suffer under the invasions of the Marathas and against the rising ambition of Ranjit Singh. But from 1809, the Patiala State came under the protection of the British, and its chief, Narindar Singh rendered a valuable service to the British during their wars with the successor of Ranjit Singh, and during the Mutiny of 1857. Pleased with his services, the British Government conferred on him in 1858, the following titles :

Sahib
Singh, 1781

Sufferings

British
protection

"*Farzandi Khas Daulat-i-Englishia,* Mansuri Zaman, Amirul Omerah, Maharaja Dhiraj, Rajeshar Sri Maharaja-i-Rajagan Narindar Singh Mahandar Bahadur."

The titles in
1858

The Jind House—B

The Jind House sprang from Gajpat Singh, the grandson of Tiloka ; who, after the defeat of Zain Khan, the Sarhind governor, in 1763, occupied a large territory extending to Panipat and Karnal ; and including the important districts of Safidon and Jhind. He, however, acknowledged the overlordship of the Delhi emperor, to whom he paid revenue. Once having fallen into arrears, he was arrested and imprisoned, and was able to secure his release only after the payment of the dues. Under the *firman* of the emperor Shah Alam, in 1772, Gajpat Singh was conferred upon the title of *Raja*. He thus secured independence, and was permitted to strike his coin. Gajpat Singh married his daughter to Maha Singh, from which Ranjit Singh was born. After his death in 1789, Gajpat Singh was succeeded by his son, Bhag Singh, who continued friendly relations with Ranjit Singh. In 1809, Jhind came under the protection of the British. Raja Sarup Singh, the sixth in descent from Gajpat Singh, rendered a valuable service to the British, during the Mutiny of 1857.

Founder
Gajpat
Singh,
1763

Delhi
supremacy

Daughter to
Maha

British
protection

He was granted the following titles : "*Farzand Dilband Rasik-ul-itikad Raja Sarup Singh Bahadur Wali Jhind.*"

Titles in
1858

The Nabha House—C

The house originated with another grandson of Tiloka,

Hamir
Singh
founded,
1755

Clash with
Gajpat

Jaswant
Singh, 1783

British
protection

Devindar,
1840

Bharpur
Singh, 1855

named Hamir Singh. Hamir Singh founded the town of Nabha in 1755, and after the defeat and murder of Zain Khan in 1763, he expanded his territories. The troops of Rahim Dad Khan, the Mughal governor of Hansi were defeated by him in 1776, and from him he wrested Rori. Hamir Singh also had a clash with Gajpat Singh of Jhind, who invaded the Nabha territory in 1774, and occupied the town of Sangrur, which ever after this, remained a part of the Jhind state

After his death in 1783, Hamir Singh, was succeeded by his son Jaswant Singh, who at the time, was only 8 years of age. The real charge of the administration was taken up by the boy's mother, Mai Desu, who acquitted herself very creditably. She died in 1790, and now Jaswant Singh took the charge in his own hands. As a result of an agreement in 1809, Jaswant Singh put himself under the protection of the British. He continued administering his state till 1840, in which year he died, and was succeeded by his son Devindar Singh. The latter was succeeded by his son Bharpur Singh in 1855. Bharpur Singh though still a minor, rendered a valuable service to the British in the Mutiny of 1857, and was duly rewarded.

CHAPTER XXX

THE CIVIL AND MILITARY ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MISLS

A — Character of the Misl Organisation

The character of the *misl* organisation has been differently commented upon. According to Cunningham thus, the *misl* organisation was "a theocratic confederate feudalism". It was theocratic because "God was their helper and only judge, community of faith or object was their moving principle, and warlike array, the devotion to steel of Gobind, was their material instrument." Regarding how it was confederate, Cunningham explains : "year by year the 'Sarbat Khalsa,' or whole Sikh people, met once at least at Amritsar, on the occasion of the festival of the mythological Rama, when the cessation of the periodical rains rendered military operations practicable. It was perhaps hoped that the performance of religious duties, and the awe inspired by so holy a place, might cause selfishness to yield to a regard for the general welfare, and the assembly of chiefs was termed as 'Gurumatta', to denote that, in conformity with Gobind's injunction, they sought wisdom in unanimity of counsel from their teacher and the book of his word." And further, regarding how it was feudalism, he says : "The leaders who thus piously met, owned no subjection to one another, and they were imperfectly obeyed by the majority of their followers; but the obvious feudal, or military notion of a chain of dependence, was acknowledged as the law, and the federate chiefs partitioned their joint conquests equally among themselves, and divided their respective shares in the same manner among their own leaders of bands, while these again subdivided their portions among their own dependents, agreeably to the general custom

Cunningham's view

Theocratic

Confederate

Feudalism

of subinfeudation."

With
confusion

But this system, Cunningham writes, existed "with all the confusion and uncertainty attendant upon a triple alliance of the kind in a society half barbarous." And further, "This positive or understood rule was not always applicable to actual conditions, In theory such men (the Sikhs) were neither the subjects, nor the retainers of any feudal chief, and they could transfer their services to whom they pleased, and acquire new lands for their own use in the name of the Khalsa or commonwealth."

Not
retainers

Bannerji
challenges

Democratic
and
Religious

Dr. A. C. Bannerji, however, challenges the view expressed by Cunningham, and asserts that the organisation was "Democratic in composition and religious in its cohesive principles." Explaining the matter Dr. Bannerji writes that the organisation could not be theocratic because the misls were neither governed on the principles of the Sikh religion, nor did the Sikh priests hold a complete sway in their policy. Again he asserts, it could not be feudal, because feudalism cannot exist apart from monarchy. And the subordinate Sikh chiefs too did not owe military or fiscal obligation to their chiefs. They could easily transfer their services from one chief to another.²

Gordon
Archer

According to Gordon, the organisation was "an oligarchy based upon republican principles."³ Archer calls it an "ethical and social constitution," which resulted from "Political occasion and incentive combined with religious zeal."⁴

G. C.
Narang's
view

"The whole nation," writes Dr. G. C. Narang without assigning any definite terminology to the system at all, "had a living faith that it was under the special protection of God. Next to God was the Guru who was supposed to be always aiding and guarding his followers. The sovereignty of

1. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, pp. 104-106.

2. A. C. Bannerjee, *Anglo-Sikh Relations*, p. lxxvii.

3. *The Sikhs*, p. 77.

4. *The Sikhs*.

the nation was vested in the *general body of the nation itself*.¹ The twelve misls were controlled by powerful chiefs but these chiefs exercised their sway with the goodwill of their followers, who always went through the ceremony of electing their chiefs. That these elections were not always nominal is shown by the fact that many times the heir-apparent was set aside and a really capable ruler was elected from among the descendants or relations of the deceased chief and sometimes even from among the troops themselves.²

Thus different views have been expressed regarding the Misl organisation. The reality is that it would be wrong to assign any definite constitution to the organisation at all. The political terminology known to us may perhaps fail in explaining the peculiar system of the Sikhs as it existed. At the best, if we are definitely called upon to define, we may agree with Ibbetson, that the Misl organisation was a "curious mixture of Theocracy, Democracy and Absolutism." "The Sikh soldiers and Sardar," as Ibbetson continues, "all fought for the Guru and when they assembled at Amritsar before the Guru Granth, they did what the religious gathering decided. It was democratic because every soldier or member of the Misl enjoyed social and political equality. But as there was no regular machinery to check the Sardar, it was virtually an absolutism."³

The reality

Ibbetson's
view

Theocracy,
Democracy,
Absolutism

B—The Gurmatta.

Gurmatta was the central body of Sikhs, which originated after the death of Guru Gobind Singh. When the Sikhs from the different parts of the country assembled at Amritsar on the occasion of certain festivals, such as *Dusehra*, *Dewali* and *Baisakhi*; they met at the *Akal Takht*, and in the presence of the holy *Granth*, discussed their political problems and the common plans of action for the community. These meetings were called the meetings of the '*Sarbat Khalsa*',

The origin

1. Italics mine.

2. Transformation of Sikhism, quoting Mufti Ali-ud-Din's *Ibrat Nama*.

3. Glossary of Castes and Tribes, vol. i, p. 704.

Gurmatta,
a resolution

Sarbat meaning the entire. And the "resolutions passed in the presence of the holy Granth were Gurmatta."¹ The word 'Gurmatta' consisted of two words i.e. *Guru* and *Matta*; and combined, it signified, the 'Advice of the Guru.' Originally the meetings of the '*Sarbat Khalsa*' did not establish a definite institution, but with the passage and under the exigencies of the time, these meetings evolved themselves into a definite central organisation of the Sikhs; which began to be called '*Gurmatta*,' after the resolutions it passed to be obeyed by the entire community. The meetings began now to be held regularly, twice a year, at Amritsar, on the occasions of the *Baisakhi* and the *Dewali*, in which the *Misldars*, or the chiefs of the *Misls*, took a prominent part, and took their decisions in the presence of their followers. To a superficial observer, therefore, it may look as an aristocracy, laying down a plan of action for the community to follow. But the reality is, as according to Forster, "that this distinction was only due to military necessity and a "self-preserving regard, nothing more."¹

Orga-
nisation
named

Not
aristocracy

Functions

Elect leader

Foreign
policy

Common
action

Spread faith

Decided
disputes

The
working

No
selfishness

Functions of the *Gurmatta* were manifold ; the most important being to elect a leader of the *Dal Khalsa* army. The *Gurmatta* decided the foreign policy for the Sikhs, and it drew a plan of general military operations against a common enemy of the community. The measures for the spread of the Sikh faith were decided upon. And it also carried deliberations to end the private feuds of the Sikh chiefs. Sometimes, the cases of disputed successions were brought before it, and the *Gurmatta* gave its decisions as a judicial Body.

Regarding the working of the *Gurmatta*, Malcolm writes : "when the chiefs meet on this occasion, it is concluded that all private animosities cease and that every man sacrifices his personal feelings at the shrine of the general good ; and actuated by principles of pure patriotism, thinks of nothing but the interests of religion and the Commonwealth to which

1. Dr. N. K. Sinha, Rise of the Sikh Power.

2. A journey from Bengal to England (1782-83) vol. i.

he belongs."

Further he writes, "when the chiefs and the principal leaders meet, the *Adi-Granth* and *Deswan Padashah Ka Granth* are placed before them and they exclaim, "*Wah Guruji Ka Khalsa*."¹ After this, the members took their seats. The prayers were then offered, at the end of which, *Krah Prasad*, or the sacred pudding was distributed and then eaten together signifying that they were all one. The *Granthi*, thereafter, read out the *Gurmatta*, or the Resolution. The discussions were held, and when all present gave their assent, the *Gurmatta* was embodied in the prayer and read aloud.

Exclaim

Embodied
in prayer

There was no military sanction behind the *Gurmatta* thus passed, nor did there exist the means to enforce an obedience to it among the Sikhs. Yet, rarely were these decisions flouted. The decisions taken by the *Guru Panth* in the presence of the *Guru Granth*, had behind them a religious sanction which was greater in force than that which those of a military dictator could carry. And every Sikh obeyed them even at the cost of his life.

The force
behind

Obedied

The system of the *Gurmatta* served the Sikhs during the darkest period of their history. Although we do not know when the first *Gurmatta* was held; the last was held in 1805, which met to advise *Ranjit Singh* on the policy he was to follow in regard to the dispute between *Holkar* and the British. But after 1805, *Ranjit Singh* having established an absolute government, dissolved the *Gurmatta*, as a political organisation. Though for religious and social matter, the Sikhs continued to meet and take decisions.

Last in
1805

C—The Internal Administration of the *Misls*

The entire Sikh community, as discussed in the last chapter, was divided into twelve confederacies or *misls*; at the head of the each of which was a chief, who was a sort of petty sovereign, who conducted the internal administration and laid down its foreign policy. The character of the inter-

The
Character

1. A Sketch of the Sikhs.

Different
feudalism

nal *misl* organisation may be called feudal. But the feudalism of the Sikhs differed from that of Europe and from that of Rajputana. Whereas, the system of Europe, as according to Gibbon, was a product of chance and barbarism; the Sikh feudalism in the Punjab was based on brotherhood, and was theocratic in its outlook. In the Sikh feudalism, there were no feudal obligations, and no personal services to be rendered by a lessee to his chief. There was no graded society as it existed in the Medieval Europe, and in Rajputana; nor there existed in it the patriarchal elements of the latter place, in which the greater number of the vassals claimed affinity in blood to the sovereign.

The
expectation

Chief's
position

"All that a Sikh chief demanded in those days," writes Griffin, "from a follower was a horse and a matchlock. All that a follower sought was protection and permission to plunder in the name of God and the Guru under the banner of the chief. There was no question of pay."¹ And although in theory, each chief was a lord paramount, exerting an exclusive authority over his "vassals even to the power of life and death," in practice, wrote George Thomas, "there exists much less cause for oppression than in any of the neighbouring states." The Sikh chief, according to Steinbach, "exercised no absolute supremacy over it (his *misl*), for his followers exacted a share in the land proportioned to the service each had rendered, merely looking upon the sirdar as the chief in war and arbiter in peace."² A follower, when dissatisfied, could easily leave a chief and seek service in another *misl*. The Sikh chiefs rather vied with one another in attracting followers, and in increasing, thereby, the population of their *misls*.

Division of
booty

When a number of the Sikh *Misldars* united together in an action, after a victory they divided the booty among themselves on the basis of the number of the fighting men contributed by each. Each chief, further divided his share among his followers on the same basis; and thus, every soldier, who

1. Griffin, Ranjit Singh..

2. Memories of George Thomas, p. 76.

3. The Sikhs, p. 13.

fought, got his share of the plunder.

The Sikh *misls*, writes Gordon, were in fact republics, in which "arms more than laws prevailed."¹

Arms, not law

The noblest feature of the *misal* organisation was the *Panchayat* system which existed in every one of its villages. "The *Panchayat*", writes Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, "was the assembly or council for determining the village affairs and consisted of most respectable representatives of tried virtue."² The chief officers of the village were *Nambardar*, *Chaukidar* and *moquddums*, and with their help, the "*Panchayat* maintained perfect justice and equity in the village." T. Fortescue writes : "No instances occur of a proprietor being driven from the village by oppression or violence of one or any number of other shares ; on the contrary, it is observable that they tender each other the most friendly and essential aids when in distress. They will supply cattle, till the lands themselves, contribute money when a sharer has been really unfortunate, and they will assist him in the disposal of his produce in providing seed, bullocks, and implements, should they be satisfied with him. This feeling.....is extended to the widow and necessitous family of a deceased sharer, and its effects scarcely surpassed."³

The noblest, the *Panchayats*

Officers

Service rendered

The decisions of the *Panchayat* were not backed by a physical force. The social pressure was sufficient to make even the most refractory member of a community bear the severest punishment most calmly. "In case of disobedience to the *Panchayat's* decision the culprit was declared an outcaste and all the members of the village community refused to associate with him for fear of the same punishment. The village functionaries rendered him no assistance, so much so that the menials too refused all service."⁴ *Panch*

Force behind

Social pressure

1. The Sikhs, p. 78.

2. History of the Sikhs, vol. I, p. 317.

3. Punjab Government Records, Delhi Residency and Agency, 1807-57, vol. I, p. 122.

4. Dr. Gupta, History, of Sikhs, i, p. 318.

Worked
honestly

was *Parmeshar*, and highest esteem was accorded to the *Panchayat*. And the *Panchayats* too worked honestly and efficiently. Misconduct and corruption in the *Panchayats* were unheard of.

Economic Conditions and the Financial Structure—I

Good order

From 1739 onwards till a settled government was given by Ranjit Singh, the Punjab visited the worst type of political confusion established in the country. Yet the Sikh chiefs acquitted themselves much better than could be expected of them. Franklin wrote thus : "The Sikh territories are said to contain prodigious quantities of cattle, horses, oxen, cows and sheep ; and grain of various kinds is produced in abundance." "Though found of plundering, the Sikhs in the interior parts of their country preserve good order and a regular government....."

Trade

Sikh
efforts

Malcolm writes regarding trade in the Punjab : The great sense of insecurity that prevailed, was responsible for the fact that the merchants and traders had deserted the main Punjab route. They did some business, however, by the mountain route, and Jammu as the "Dar-ul-Aman" or the "Abode of Peace" profited at the expense of the lower region. Moreover, even after the establishment of some sort of order, the presence of so many chiefs, each with a right to levy a toll on merchandise, was not certainly conducive to the revival of trade and commerce. "The Sikh chiefs, however, discovered the injury which their interests have suffered from this cause, and have endeavoured not without success, to restore confidence to the merchants ; and a great part of the shawl trade now flows through the cities of Lahore, Amritsar, Patiala to Hindustan."¹ The foreign merchants settled in the Punjab, were accorded due protection, though "foreign traders on their way to other countries were pretty often plundered."²

Protection
and
Plunder

1. Sketch of the Sikhs, p. 126. see Sinha,
The rise of the Sikh Power.
2. Forster, i, p. 293.

The Punjab exported during this period, to the Deccan, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Kashmir and other hill regions, and to the countries west of Attock, the goods such as sugar, rice, wheat, white cloth, matchlocks, swords, bows and arrows, horses, camels and salt. While the important imports of the Punjab from these countries consisted of fruits, spices, sulphur, indigo, opium, shawls, fruits, iron and other inferior commodities.

Punjab exports

The imports

And for this, the "most important trade routes generally converged from Amritsar by way of Machchiwara; in the cis-Sutlej region via Hansi, Rangeghur, Oricha into west Rajputana, and via Kythal, Jhind, Karnal into Rajputana."¹

Trade routes

The Land Tenures

In the land administration, four main kinds of land tenure existed in the time of the *Misls*. One of these was known as *Pattidari*, which was the land held by an associate of a *Misl* chief. Such holder, though subordinate to the chief, was bound to him only with the tie of mutual defence and protection. The tenure, in this case, could not be sold, though one could mortgage it freely. The second was *Misaldari*, and this represented the land which a *Misl* Chief allotted to an outsider as a free reward for his co-operation. A *Misaldari* holder was completely free in the management of his land, and he could even transfer himself with his possessions to some other *Misl*. The third, the *Tabadari* land tenure applied to the land held by a retainer, or a tenant-at will. And in this case the land could be forfeited by the chief at any time. And the fourth was the *Jagirdari* tenure, under which the land was allotted by a chief to his dependants or relatives, out of his own portion; and hence, the holders of this land were entirely under the personal control of the Chief himself.

Pattidari

Misaldari

Tabadari

Jagirdari

Besides, at some places, such as Jhang, there existed the *Hathrakhaidari* tenure. This was the land which one handed over with the condition to pay one's land revenue. The

Hath-rakhaidar

1. Prinsep, *Origin of the Sikh Power*, pp 34-35.

holder of this land paid the land revenue which the first owner of the land owed, and kept rest of the produce from this land as his fee. The first owner was thus freed from the Land Revenue obligation.

New land

Sometimes a person could acquire some new land by breaking some waste land in the neighbourhood of a village, of which sufficient was available. In this case, however, the holder of the land could have no say in the village management.

Integrity of land

The integrity of the land was maintained by the rules such as the one which forbade a person to sell his share of his ancestral land to an outsider. And in case a man was unable to cultivate the whole of his land, he paid his revenue only on the land he cultivated. The rest of his land was cultivated by the community.

Land Revenue Assessment and its Rate

In kind

During the time of the *Misl* rule, the Punjab is said to have been in a state of high cultivation. The Land Revenue was paid in kind; except in the case of the crops, such as sugar-cane, cotton and indigo, of the yield of which no correct estimate could be made, and thus, in this case, the revenue

Cash

was paid in cash. In the case of the cash payment, the village money lenders paid and they were helped later by the *Kardar*, in realising the dues from the cultivator.

Methods of assessment
Batai

The methods of assessment did not vary much and in the most of the cases, the *Batai* system was followed. Under the *Batai* system, the land revenue was assessed on the threshing flour after the harvest was gathered. This method had been borrowed from the Mughals, and under it, from the good quality of land, as much as forty percent or even fifty percent of the total produce was taken. In the case of a poor soil, however, the rate could be reduced to one-third, or even to one-fourth.¹

Fixed rate

In a few cases, a fixed rate of revenue was realised on

1. See Distt. Gaz. Sialkot, p. 93.

the basis of the average income for some past years; as for instance, one rupee for a *bigha*. And some time, a weak chief remitted the entire Land Revenue in favour of an influential man of the locality, who realised the revenue according to his whim, and helped the chief in the administration.

Remitted
in favour

Besides Land Revenue, another source of income was the *Rakhi*. The *Rakhi* system has already been discussed in one of our previous chapters.¹ It was imposed by the Sikhs when disorder became the order of the day. Life in those days was not secure and there was none to protect the rights of the people. So the Sikhs asked the people to pay them one-fifth of their produce, and promised in return to protect them from the internal disorder, and the external invasions. This was called *Rakhi* system, and it still existed in some villages, even when the Sikhs themselves became the rulers of the country.

Rakhi
another
source

How it
worked

And yet another important source of income was the plunder, and the booty which fell into their hands after annihilating an enemy. They realised tributes from petty chiefs. Duties were imposed on imports and exports. And another important source of revenue was the income from judicial proceeds, as discussed below.

Plunder
yet
another

The Judicial Administration — II

The most important local court of justice under the Sikh *Misls* was the *Panchayat*. *Panchayats* worked efficiently and honestly, and they commanded a perfect respect among the people.² Above the *Panchayats* was the court of the chief of the *Misl*, which decided all the civil as well as the criminal cases. And when there was a case against the chief himself, or when there was a case in which the community as a whole might be interested, it was taken to the Central Assembly or the *Gurmatta*.

The courts
Panchayat

Court of
the Chief

Gurmatta

Justice, as referred to above, was an important source of income, and efforts were made to realise money, both

Source of
income

1. See Index.

2. See Malcolm, p. 81.

from the plaintiff, as well as the defendant, at every stage. In the case of theft for instance, a plaintiff was to pay a sum of money equal to one-fourth of the total value of the stolen goods, at the time of filing a suit; and when the stolen goods were recovered, he paid what was called *Nazrana*. A man found guilty was to pay a heavy *Jurmana* or fine, and if acquitted, he would pay a gratitude money, known as *Shukrana*. In the event of a case being prolonged, both the parties paid what was known as *Taikhana*.

“Crimes and trespass, as in the middle ages, are atoned for by money: the fines are unlimited by any rule, and generally levied arbitrarily according to the means of the offender whose property is attached and his family placed under restraint to enforce payment.” “All officers under the Chief and employed by him in districts and departments follow his example, but if guilty of excesses are ultimately thrown into a *Bora* (*Bhora*) or dungeon or required to refund, and when they have satisfied the cupidity of their superior they are generally permitted to resume their functions, honoured with the shawl as a mark of favour.”

Capital punishment was rare, but incorrigible culprits were punished with the loss of nose or ears, or some other part of the body. Mutilation, too, however, could be paid for.

In the case of the stolen cattle, if the *Surag khoj* or track was traced to a village, the chief of the village had either to show the track beyond, or to permit his village to be searched, or he had to pay for the stolen cattle. In the case of petty thefts, as discussed above, the sufferer paid one-fourth of the value stolen at the time of his filing the suit. One who turned approver, was pardoned, and his share of the spoils, was charged upon the rest of the thieves. And in the case of a highway robbery, the chief in whose territory the crime had been committed, was to trace out the criminals and restore the goods carried away. In case he failed in giving the justice, the chief whose subject thus suffered, had a resort to *lex talionis*. He could attack and

drive away some hundreds of the cattle heads.

Laws of Succession

The cannons of inheritance and succession differed between the territories of the Malwa and those of the Majha. In the Majha territories, the succession was either by *Bhai-wand*, or by *Choondawand*. Under *Bhai-wand*, the property of the deceased was equally distributed among the sons, reserving in some cases, an extra share termed *Kharch Sardari*, for the elder. Under *Choondawand*, an equal division of the property was made among the mothers, in proportion to the number of their respective male issues.

In Majha

Bhai-wand

*Choonda-
wand*

In the case of a deceased having left no male issue, the property was divided among his brothers and nephews, to which his widows became contestants. Widows, according to the Hindu *Shastras* held a prior title; but the Sikhs generally excluded the female line from succession, in order to prevent the estates from becoming a part of another family's possessions. The problem in such cases was solved by what was known as *Chadarandazi*, in which the eldest of the surviving brothers placed a white sheet of cloth on the widow, and a *nath* or ring in her nose, and thus converted her into his wife. In case, however, when brother and the nephews both failed, the widows succeeded to the property.

When no
male issue

*Chadar-
andazi*

Widows
succeeded

In the Malwa country, however, the right of primogeniture in the male was respected, though proper grants of land or *Jagirs* were always made for the maintenance of the younger sons. With the exception of the Bhaïs of Kythal, the Malwa Sikhs also admitted the use of *Karewa*, or widow marriage, to avoid a dispute between widow and the brothers. The Bhaïs of Kythal, who did not admit the use of *Karewa*, set aside a part of the property for the maintenance of the widow.

In Malwa
Primogeni-
ture
respected

Also
Karewa

Bhaïs'
exception

The Mohammedans, both in the Majha, as well as the Malwa, were allowed to follow their own laws of succession.¹

Mohamme-
dans

Boundary Disputes and Bloodsheds

1. See Narang, Transformation of Sikhism, pp. 288 etc.

Decided
by
conventions

Blood-sheds

The boundary disputes were generally decided by conventions of the neighbouring *zamindars*, who before resuming the work, took solemn oath to act impartially. Some times murders took place in the boundary disputes, and the cases became more serious. The blood-sheds, however, could be atoned for by giving a daughter in marriage to a near relative of the murdered. And some times, they could also be commuted to a payment of Rs. 150 to Rs. 200 or 125 bighas of land. Generally, however, blood-money and taking of a daughter in marriage, were considered an inadequate recompense, and a revenge was sought.

Nuptial Contracts

Referred to
Panchayats

The cases of the breach of promise in the nuptial contracts, were referred to the *Panchayats*, which could award the plaintiff another female from the family of the girl ; or in case of there being no girl available, the defendant could be punished to search for a substitute. And some times the defendant could be asked to pay for the damages incurred by the plaintiff¹

D—The Military Administration

Total
strength

Different
views

Higher
than one
lakh

Infantry

Different estimates have been drawn regarding the number of soldiers which the Sikh *Misls* could field at the time of war. According to Timur Shah, the son of Ahmad Shah Abdali, thus, the Sikhs could field as many as 50,000 well equipped and well dressed horse, besides a large number of the Infantry soldiers. The estimate of George Thomas lay at 60,000 horse and 50,000 foot. According to Brown, they had 73,000 horse and 25,000 foot. Forster's account of 1783, showed the Sikhs having about two lakh soldiers ; while according to Franklin, in 1800, their cavalry alone numbered 2,48,000, and they also possessed forty guns. Thus, the estimates vary, yet it is certain that the total number of their soldiers must have been sufficiently higher than one lakh.

Infantry, among the Sikhs, was not an important branch of service. It was only in the time of Ranjit Singh that

1. See Narang, Transformation of Sikhism, pp. 238 etc.

its importance was realised, and the infantry troops were raised. In the time of the *Misls*, the infantry soldier was considered inferior to cavalry, and was, says Griffin, in time of war left behind to garrison forts, or to look after the women.¹ The soldiers, in fact, considered it below their dignity to fight without a horse. A great mass of them were cavalrymen, and were famous for their effective use of matchlocks when mounted. The horses, in the *Misl* time, "were generally reared in Lahore jungle in the vicinity of Bhatinda."²

Inferior

Cavalrymen

Nor did the Sikhs possess a heavy artillery. They had only forty field guns in 1800, and one of the greatest of the difficulties, the Sikhs faced against the Mughals and the Durrani invaders, was their inability to meet the heavy artillery of their opponents.

No heavy
artillery

Recruitment in the Sikh forces was entirely voluntary. No records of names, service or payment were kept. There were no gradations in the army, and no provision for regular training to the soldiers. The regular drilling system was introduced only later on by Ranjit Singh,³ and then too, it was not liked in the beginning. The soldiers termed it contemptuously as '*Rugs Looluan*', 'ballet steps' !

Recruit-
ment
voluntary

No
gradation

No drill

Still, however, there was discipline among the Sikh soldiers. As a result of the religious zeal with which the Sikhs fought, the desertions in the battle-field were rare. Disobedience to the officers was punished by war councils of five.

Still
discipline

The Sikh soldiers received no regular monthly salaries. The most common mode of payment was in kind at the time of harvest. But sometimes payment in money, or allotment of land was also done. The soldiers also received a share of the booty which fell into their hands at the time of a conquest.

Payments

The Sikh weapons of war consisted of swords, spears, sabre,

1. Ranjit Singh, p. 132.

2. Dr. Narang, Transformation of Sikhism.

3. See Author's 2nd vol. of this work, p. 176.

Weapons of war	two-edged daggers, lances, muskets, guns, cutlasses, pikes, bows and arrows. Shields of hide or coats of mail were used.
Their horses	The chiefs were distinguished by finer horses. The horses were well trained, and were valued highly by the Sikhs, who mourned on their death.
National flag	Their national flag was of saffron colour, but the heraldic sign on it is not known. Their war cry was <i>Sat Sri Akal</i> , and their movement swift.
war cry	
Dead-drinkers	The Sikhs, according to Gordon, were dead-drinkers. Tobacco and snuff being prohibited, they used spirits and bhang (hemp). Their dress varied, but the "Akalis always dressed in the sacred blue garments, were heavily armed, and in addition carried several thin sharp-edged quoits round their turbans". ¹
Dress	
Methods of war	Regarding their methods of war, George Thomas, who fought the Sikhs more than once, wrote thus : "They were usually armed with a spear, a match-lock and a sabre. With the enemy they engage in continuous skirmish. They advance and retreat until men and horse become tired. They then retreat to some distance where they leave their horse to graze, like a very frugal meal and begin skirmishing again. They have no tents, their cakes of flour serve as dishes and plates. Each horseman has two blankets, one for himself and another for his horse, kept beneath the saddle." According to Colonel Polier, their "horses were so well trained that they could stop from a full career." They adopted guerilla tactics, and according to Forster, when they attacked their enemy, forty or fifty of them loaded their guns, and rushed towards the enemy, stopping at distance, they discharged their guns, and rushed back. The guns were loaded again, and the practice was repeated. Their aims were always correct, and they caused a confusion in the enemy's ranks.
Advance and retreat	
Trained horses	
Guerilla	
Forster explains	
No pitched	The Sikhs rarely fought pitched battles, and when they did fight face to face, often they would run away before the enemy, giving an impression that they left the battle-field.

1. Gordon, p. 75-77.

But when the enemy pursued them, and was cut off from its main force, they suddenly stopped and attacked, and thus inflicted a heavy loss.

Cut off

“The burning sun, heavy rains, freezing winter and rough weather exercised no deterring influence on them..... They never allowed their private feelings, desires, loves, sorrows, likes and dislikes to come between them and the good of the Panth.” “On the other hand, their success did not make them lose their head.....They seldom resorted to cold-blooded murder even of their enemies, and respected the chastity of woman as their faith and honour.” “No superiority of his (Sikh’s) enemies in number, no stroke, no shot, no shell could make his heart quail since his *Amrit*, taken at the time of baptism, bound him to fight single-handed against millions. They could ply their swords, pliant as a cane and sharp as a razor, with perfect ease and dexterity, while in the discharge of matchlocks they were invariably dead shots.”¹

Their character

And fortitude

Qazi Nur Muhammad, the author of *Jang Namah* wrote about them : “In fact they are lions at the time of battle and when in festivities they surpass Hatim (in generosity). When they take hold of the Indian sword in hand they gallop from Hind (gangetic Doab, invaded in February, 1764) up to the country of Sind.....when they bend a bow they set in it the foe-killing arrow. When they pull it up to the ear, the body of the enemy trembles like a cane. If their hatchet strikes a coat of mail, then this coat of mail, itself on the body of the enemy becomes a shroud. The body of each of them looks like a hillock and in grandeur excels fifty men. Bahram (a Persian hero) killed wild asses and could frighten tigers. If Bahram Gor comes before them, he also would admit their superiority.”²

Jang Namah says

On excels fifty

Such, readers, was the dexterity, courage and spirit which

1. Dr. Gupta, A History of the Sikhs, i, pp. 286-18.
2. Quoted by Dr. Gupta, Hist. of Sikhs, i, pp. 288-289. Qazi Nur Mod. came in the train of Ahmad Shah Abdali in 1764 to fight the Sikhs.

Honour to
the heroes

Guru Gobind Singh had infused into his Sikhs. Rarely has a nation suffered so much and sacrificed so much. Sikhs were heroes to a man, who fought and suffered ; and today, when we enjoy the best of freedom and the most democratic of rights, let us pay our homage to the sacrifices these heroes made. From Guru Nanak the saint, to Guru Gobind Singh the saint-soldier, Banda Bahadur, the valiant fighter; and Bhai Mani Singh, Bota Singh and other, all glories to the heroes who laid down their lives so that their nation and country may flourish.

APPENDIX I

THE SOURCES OF THE PUNJAB HISTORY

The information regarding the Punjab History is too much scattered. The best sources of our information are either in Punjabi, or in Persian, and the greatest difficulty that an impartial observer comes across while consulting them is that most of these works suffer from bias and prejudice. In many of the cases, the writers have religion as the motivating force, and hence, not unoften, their works have facts mixed with fables and myth. In such cases, only a discerning eye can draw out a correct information and write a history. The available sources of the Punjab History can conveniently be discussed under the following scheme.

A—THE PRIMARY SOURCES

Gurmukhi—I

1. One of the most authentic sources regarding the Punjab History in *Gurmukhi* is the *Adi Granth* which was transcribed by Bhai Gurdas and dictated by Guru Arjan in 1604. A detailed study of this work, its contents and character has already been made.¹ Although the work is no book of history, yet some passages in it give us ample historical information. The *Tikke Di Var* in it, written by Satta and Balwand, for instance, gives us some information regarding the life and activities of the first five Gurus. Bhai Jetha's² account regarding the life of Guru Amar Das, in *Gauri ki Var I*, is another important historical composition. *Sach Nam di Bani*, written by Sundar, is another important composition. Besides, much can be gathered regarding the political, social, economic and religious lives of the people, from the verses of the Gurus themselves.
2. *Bachitra Natak* written by Guru Gobind Singh is another very important source of our information. From this book we get some facts regarding the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur.

1. See Chapter XI of this book.

2. Who later became Guru Ram Das.

The birth of Guru Gobind Singh himself, and his activities and the battles, such as that of Bhangani. We also get from it some facts regarding the social and religious practices of the people. And whatever of the information we may get from this book, it is undoubtedly the most authentic information. Besides, the high taste of poetry depicted in it, shows how great and a versatile scholar, the Guru was.

3. The *Zafarnama*, a letter written in Persian by Guru Gobind Singh, to Aurangzeb, which also is available in the *Gurmukhi* script, gives us some facts regarding the Guru's relations with the Mughals, and is another very authentic source of our information.
4. The *Vars* of Bhai Gurdas, written in the time of Gurus Arjan and Hargobind, though not very reliable regarding the earlier history, can be depended upon for the information they supply regarding the Gurus who were contemporary of Bhai Gurdas. The total number of these *Vars* is forty, and of these the 1st, 10th, 24th, 25th and the 34th are the most important from the history point of view. The first *Var* gives us information regarding the life and *Udasis* of Guru Nanak. The tenth gives us the names of important Sikhs and important Sikh places of the time.

The other works which may be considered as primary, but which are to be studied with a discerning eye are :

5. The *Janamsakhi* of Sewa Dass.
6. *Gian Ratnawali* of Bhai Mani Singh.
7. Bhai Bala's *Janamsakhi*.
8. The *Janamsakhi* dated 1701 and caligraphed by a Brahmin and
9. The *Janamsakhi* of Mehrban. These works have already been discussed in the Chapter III of this book.²

1. See pp. 46-47. of this book.

2. See pp. 46-50.

10. The *Gur Sobha* of Senapat, a follower of Guru Gobind Singh, is a more important work in this respect.

Persian—II

1. *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, by Mohsin Fani, who was a contemporary of the fifth, sixth and the seventh Gurus, and a personal friend of the sixth Sikh Guru. It is a more balanced account, but the author sometimes believes in myth and colours his account with it.
2. *Muntkhab-ul-Lubab* by Khafi Khan, in 2 vols. 1729. The author deals with Gurus Teg Bahadur and Gobind Singh, and gives a detailed account of the activities of Banda.
3. *Tazkara-i-Tahmas Miskin*, by Tahmas Khan Miskin, 1780. Miskin was a personal attendant of Muin-ul-Mulk and Mughlani Begum, and gives a very valuable account regarding their activities.
4. *Tarikh-i-Iradat Khan* by Iradat Khan, gives a valuable account regarding the activities of Banda.
5. *Jang Nama* by Qazi Nur Muhammad, 1765, is an eye-witness account of the seventh invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali.
6. *Zafar Namah* of Ghulam Muhayu-ud-din, 1750, gives an account of the first two of Abdali's invasions.
7. *Muntakhab-i-Akhbar*, (British Museum) are news-letters which give abstracts of daily intelligence from Delhi, and are important more particularly for the time of Shah Alam II.
8. *Ibrat Namah* by Khair-ud-din Muhammad of Allahabad, in three volumes, 1806. The author was the Private Secretary to the son of Shah Alam II, and starting his account with Shah Alam I, ends with that of Shah Alam II, giving some valuable information regarding Ahmad Shah Abdali's invasions, and other occurrences in the Punjab.
9. *Ibrat Nama* by Mohmad Kasim Lahori, who was present at the Haidri Flag and other such incidents gives a valuable account regarding Banda Bahadur.
10. *Khazana-i-Amira*, by Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami, written

between 1762 and 1763. The author gives a good information regarding the Sikh occupation of Lahore.

The other important Persian works are :

10. *Ibrat Namah* by Muhammad Qasim, 1720 ;
11. *Khulast-ut-Twarikh* by Sujan Rai Bhandari of Batala, 1695 ;
12. *Tarikh-i-Muhammad Shahi* by Khushal Chand ;
13. *Tarikh-i-Alamgir Sani*, anonymous ;
14. *Tarikh-i-Anand Ram* By Anand Ram ;
15. *Tarikh-i-Ahmad Shahi*, anonymous ;
16. *Tarikh-i-Manazil-ul-Fatuh* by Muhammad Ja'afar Shamlu, 1761 ;
17. *Jahan Kusha-i-Nadiri*, by Mohd. Mahdi Ali Khan, 1758 ;
18. *Khazana-i-Amira* by Ghulam Ali, 1762 ;
19. *Chahar Gulshan*, Ray Chatarman, 1759 ;
20. *Muasir-ul-Umara* by Shahnawaz Khan Samsam-ud-daulah, 1758 ;
21. *Tarikh-i-Shah Alam* by Munna Lal ;
22. *Shah Alam Namah*, by Ghulam Ali, 1788 ;
23. *Intikhab-i-Akhbarat-i-Darbar-i-Mu'alla-wa-Mahadji Sindiha Bahadur*, Salar Jang Ms. ;
24. *Tarikh-i-Kharoj-i-Nadir* by Mohd. Baksh Ashub, two volumes, 1785 ;
25. *Bayan-i-Waqi*, by Khwaja Abdul Karim Kashmiri, 1784 ;
6. *Ahwal-i-Najib-ud-daulah*, by Bihari Lal, 1787 ;
27. *Tarikh-i-Najib-ud-daulah* by Sur-ud-din, 1773 ;
28. *Persian Records in Alienation Office*, at Puna, Supplement of S. P. D., No. 1964.
29. *Tarikh Ali*, by Mohd. Saleh Kudrat, Ms., 1785 ;
30. *Risala-i-Nanak Shah* by Budh Singh Arora, Ms., 1785.

Marathi—III

1. *Marathyanchya Itihasachin Sadhanen*, edited by V. K. Rajwada. The work is in 21 Vols. of which Vol. No. XII is very useful.
2. *Historical Papers* concerning Mahadji Sindhia, by G. S.

Sardesai, Alijab Darbar Press, Gwalior, 1937.

3. *Selections from Peshwa's Daftar*, edited by G. S. Sardesai, consisting of 21 volumes. The volumes No. 2, 21, 27 and 29 are useful for the Punjab History.
4. *Despatches from Ahalya Bai's Court* by D. B. Parasnis, in 2 vols. is also useful for the purpose.

English—IV

1. *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sikhs in India Tracts*, by Major James Browne, who was the English Minister at Shah Alam's Court, 1788, is a valuable account of the Sikh history.
2. *Sketch of the Sikhs*, by Lt. Col. Malcolm, 1812. Malcolm accompanied Lake pursuing Holkar into Punjab in 1804-5, and collected his material.
3. *A Journey from Bengal to England*, by Forster, (1782-3). It is a valuable account in two volumes, the first of which is useful.
4. *History of India as told by her own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, London, 1877, Vol. viii.
5. *History of Hindustan*, by Alexander Dow, in three Vols., 1768.
6. *Catalogue of Coins in the Punjab Museum, Lahore*, by R. B. Whitehead, Vol. iii.
7. Besides one can get some material from the Foreign Department, Select Proceedings, 1779 ; Political Proceedings, 1792, 1798 ; Bengal Select Committee Proceedings, 1770 ; and Secret Proceedings, 1776, 1786 and 1789.

B—SECONDARY

Gurmukhi—(i)

1. *Prachin Panth Prakash* by Bhai Ratan Singh, whose account is based on the stories he heard from his father, who was present in the Ghalugharas, is a valuable account, though to be read carefully.
2. *Panth Prakash* by Bhai Gian Singh is almost a copy of the

above account. But the dates given in this account seem almost all to be wrong.

3. *Mehma Prakash* by Baba Sarup Das Bhalla. The book deals with Gurus and the activities of the Sikhs. It is a valuable work, though to be read carefully.
4. *Suraj Prakash* by Bhai Santokh Singh, is another work of great value, but to be read again with a discerning eye.
5. *Katik ki Baisakh*, by Karam Singh Historian, is a valuable study of the date of Guru Nanak's birth. It also discusses the authenticity of Bhai Bala's Janam Sakhi.
6. *Nanak Prakash* by Bhai Santokh Singh, which was written in 1823, or about three centuries after Guru Nanak's death, is not very reliable, though it does give some good information.¹
7. On Guru Nanak one also gets a biography prepared for the followers of Baba Hindal.
8. Nanak Chandrodaya (Sanskrit) by Pandit Ganda Ram
9. A biography published by Diwan Buta Singh.
10. Another biography attributed to Bhai Mani Singh.
11. Biography by Anand Ghan, a Sadhu of the Udasi sect.
12. And another one written at Lahore and completed in 1733.
13. The Biography of Guru Nanak by Vir Singh is an important work.
14. Dr. Mohan Singh refers to six more Gurmukhi manuscript biographies of Guru Nanak, which fell into his hands. He writes : "Two slipped out for ever ; one was presented to me by Bawa Budh Singh, who said he had received it from the Poonch State ; it was left at Lahore with my other belongings ; the other most precious indeed for its numerous paintings of Guru Nanak Dev and his contemporaries, was the personal property of the late Khan Sher Mohammed Khan of Mardan. He had it in the family as an heirloom, received from the head of a Sikh shrine in N.W.F.P." About the

1. See pp. 47-48 of this book.

remaining four, the reader is referred to Chapter III of this book.¹

15. *Bansawali Nama*, by Kesar Singh Chhibar.
16. *Kuj Hor Dharmik Lekh*, Prof. Sahib Singh.
17. *Panjabi Sahit Bare*, Surinder Singh Kohli and Surinder Singh Uppal.
18. *Gur Bilas*, Sukha Singh.
19. *Nawab Kapur Singh*, by Prem Singh Hoti.
20. *Sikhi te Sikh Ithas*, by Shamsheer Singh.
21. *Punjabi Sahit di Utpati te Vikas*, Prof. Kirpal Singh, Parmindar Singh.
22. *Punjabi Sahit da Ithas*, Dr. Gopal Singh.
23. *Kabir Shabdavali*.
24. *Pandrik* by Kapur Singh.
25. *Ramkali Sad Tika*, by Prof. Sahib Singh.
26. *Sikh Shahid*, Piara Singh Datta.
27. *Dashmesh Chamatkar*.
28. *Banda Bahadur* by Karam Singh Historian is a valuable and objective study on the subject.
29. *Maharaja Ala Singh* by Karam Singh being based on original sources, is a valuable work.
30. *Jussa Singh Binod* by Ram Sukh Rao, is also a good work.
31. *Maharaja Kaura Mal* by Ganda Singh is a good study based on some original sources.

Persian—(ii)

1. *Tarikh-i-Sikhan*, Khushwaqat Rai, Ms., 1811.
2. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Sohan Lal, Arya Press, Lahore, 1885.
3. *Siyar-ul-Mutakhrin*, by Gulam Hussain Khan, Naval Kishore Press, Kanpur, 1897.
4. *Ahwal-i-Adina Beg Khan*, Anonymous, Ms. It is a biography of Adina Beg and the only work on the subject, probably written in 1806.
5. *Tarikh-i-Slatin-i-Afghana*, by Ahmad Yadgar, Ms., 1835.

6. *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, by Bute Shah, 1848.
7. *Tarikh-i-Sultani*, by Sultan Muhammad Khan, 1883.
8. *Mukhtsar Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, Ala-ud-din, 1883.
9. *Risala-i-Sahib Numa*, by Ganesh Das, 1849.
10. *Khalsa Nama*, by Rattan Chand.
11. *Chahar Chaman*, Ms., Daulat Rai, 1820.
12. *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, by Ahmad Shah of Batala, 1820.
13. *Khalsa Nama*, by Bakht Mal, 1814.
14. *Tarikh-i-Husain Shahi*, by Sayyid Imam-ud-din Husaini, 1798.
15. *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari*, Muhammad Ali Khan Ansari, 1787.
16. *Farhat-un-Nazirin*, Mohammad Aslam, 1770.
17. *Ibrat Namah*, Ali-ud-din, Ms., 1854.
18. *Tarikh-i-Multani*, by Sultan Mohammad Khan, 1881.
19. *Halat-i-Multan*, Mohammad Yusuf, Ms.
20. *Tarikh-i-Ahmad Shahi*, Ms. 1167 Hijri.
21. *Tehmas Nama*, Tehmas Khan, Ms. 1778.
22. *Tarikh-i-Muhammad Shahi*, by Khushal Chand gives a good account of the life and career of Banda.

Urdu—(iii)

1. *Shamshir Khalsa*, by Gian Singh Giani, 1913. It gives history of the Sikhs from 1707 to 1769.
2. *Raj Khalsa*, by Gian Singh Giani, in two volumes, gives an account of individual chiefs of the 18th century.
3. *Gosha-i-Punjab*, by Radha Kishan, 1861, deals with Cis-Sutlej Sikh States.
4. *Tarikh-i-Patiala*, by Mohammad Hasan, 1878, is a good work on the subject.
5. *Dastur-ul-Amal*, by Sarup Lal, 1865.
6. *Tarikh-i-Sikhan*, by Sarup Lal, 1865. It deals with cis-Sutlej States.
7. *Saulat-i-Afghani*, by Hazi Mohammad Zardar Khan, 1876.
8. *Tarikh-i-Afghan*, by Abdul Majid.
9. *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, Gian Singh.

English—(iv)

1. *History of India under Babur and Humayun*, by Erskin, Vol. I.
2. *History of the Rise of Mohammedan Power in India*, by Briggs.
3. *History of the Punjab*, by Mohammad Latif. It is a good account, though dates are not always correct.
4. *History of the Sikhs*, by W. L. M'Gregor.
5. *History of the Sikhs*, by J. D. Cunningham.
6. *A History of the Sikhs*, by Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, in 3 Vols., 1944.
7. *Later Mughal History of the Punjab*, by Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, 1944.
8. *Transformation of Sikhism*, Dr. G. C. Narang.
9. *Evolution of Khalsa*, by I. B. Bannerji. It is one of the very good studies of the Guru Period of Sikh History, in two volumes.
10. *Rajas of the Punjab*, by Lepel Griffin.
11. *Chiefs of the Punjab*, by Lepel Griffin.
12. *A Short History of the Sikhs*, by Teja Singh and Ganda Singh.
13. *The Sikhs*, Gen. Gordon.
14. *A Report on the Sikhs*, by Col. Pollier.
15. *History of the Gurdwara Shahid Ganj, Lahore*, by Ganda Singh.
16. *Social and Economic History of the Punjab*, G. S. Chhabra (Ready).
17. *The Sikhs*, Archer.
18. *History of Medieval India*, by Ishwari Prasad.
19. *The Sikh Religion* by Macauliffe, in 6 Vols.
20. *Religions of India*, by Barth.
21. 'Anthropology Bulletin,' Vol. III, No. I, Fewett.
22. *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, Dr. Tara Chand.
23. *Vaisvaism and Saivism*, by Grierson and Bhandarkar.
24. *Kabir and Kabir Panth*, G. H. Westcott.

25. *Kabir Poems*, by Rabindra Nath Tagore.
26. *Rise of the Maratha Power*, by Ranade.
27. The different back issues of the *Spokesman Weekly*, published from Asoka Road, New Delhi. Its special Nos. are sometimes very valuable.
28. *The Divine Master*, by Sewaram Singh.
29. *Adi Granth* by Dr. Trumpp.
30. *Glossary of Punjab Tribes and Castes*, by Ibbetson.
31. *Ranjit Singh*, by Lepel Griffin.
32. *Some Studies in Sikhism*, by Bhai Jodh Singh.
33. *The Message of Sikhism*, by Harbans Singh.
34. *Sikhism*, by Teja Singh.
35. *The Sikh People*, by Dr. Ganda Singh.
36. *The Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. IX, by Grierson.
37. *History of Indigenous Education in the Punjab*, by Dr. Leitner.
38. *Sikhan De Raj Di Vikhia*, translation by M. H. Court.
39. *District Gazetteers* of different Punjab districts.
40. *Imperial Gazetteer*, of India, Punjab, Vols. 2.
41. *Tazuk-i-Jehangiri*, by Rogers and Beveridge.
42. *History of Aurangzeb*, by J. N Sarkar, 3 Vols.
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C—The Miscellaneous

The Sikh tradition provides us with yet another source of information. The traditional prayer of the Sikhs, the *Ardasa*, repeats every morning the important sacrifices of the Sikhs and the names of the Sikh martyrs. There are some proverbs still known among the common folk

of the Sikhs, such as :

ਮਨੂੰ ਅਸਾਡੀ ਦਾਤਰੀ, ਅਸੀਂ ਮਨੂੰ ਦੇ ਜੋਇ ।
ਜਿਉਂ ਜਿਉਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਵਡਦਾ, ਅਸੀਂ ਦੂਣੇ ਸਵਾਏ ਹੋਇ ॥

And :

ਖਾਦਾ ਪੀਤਾ ਲਾਹੇ ਦਾ ।
ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਅਹਿਮਦ ਸ਼ਾਹੇ ਦਾ ।

And they also throw a light on the Sikh activities.

The Sikh historical places, such as Anandpur Makhwal, and Kartarpur near Jullundur, still have some buildings of the days of the Sikh Gurus, some intact, and some in ruins, which can help us in the reconstruction of the History. Then there are weapons of war, and articles of dress, which were used by the Gurus, or some other Sikh leaders and which are still preserved at places such as Har Mandar, Amritsar; Anandpur Makhwal; Sri Hazoor Sahib, Nander; and Benaras etc.

APPENDIX II

THE DATE OF GURU NANAK'S BIRTH

Of late, a very interesting controversy has been raised among the scholars of the Punjab History, regarding the exact month in which Guru Nanak was born. These days, the birth of Guru Nanak is celebrated on the full-moon day, or the *Purnima* of *Kartik*, but the writers such as Karam Singh¹, assert that the Guru was born in the month of *Baisakh*, and not in that of *Kartik*. Macauliffe also forwards a similar view, and says that till the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the birth was celebrated only in the month of *Baisakh*. It was during his time that the change took place, and the birth began to be celebrated in the month of *Kartik*.

Several reasons are forwarded, as to why did this change take place. At Ram Tirath, a few miles from Amritsar, a very big Hindu fair used to be held on every *Purnima* of *Kartik*. The Sikhs attended this fair in large numbers, which was not liked by some Sikh religious leaders. One of these leaders, named Bhai Sant Singh, who lived at Amritsar, desiring to establish "an opposition fair in Amritsar," as according to Macauliffe, "on the same date and thus prevent the Sikhs from making the Hindu pilgrimage to Ram Tirath," proposed a change, and with the consent of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, started celebrating the birth on the same day, as the Hindu fair at Ram Tirath was held. Besides, in the month of *Baisakhi*, several other Hindu fairs are held, to divert the Sikh attention from which, it may have been thought essential to celebrate Guru Nanak's birth in the same month.

We have some very definite sources of this history which support the view that Guru Nanak in fact was born in *Baisakh*. The month of *Kartik* is also supported by some accounts, the best among which may be *Bhai Bala's Janamsakhi*. But this *Janamsakhi*, as we have already

1. See his book *Katik ke Baisakh* (in Punjabi)

studied, is not a very reliable and authentic account. Nor does the *Nanak Parkash*, of Bhai Santokh Singh, which was written about three centuries after the death of Guru Nanak, deserve our better attention. According to this account, Guru Nanak was born in *Kartik* 1526 *Vikarmi* and died *Assu* 1596. Which means that the Guru lived for 69 years and 11 months. But it is generally believed that Guru lived for 70 years and 5 months, and strangely enough, '*Nanak Parkash*' itself forwards that the Guru lived for this period. If we consider Guru Nanak being born in *Baisakh* 1526 ; till *Assu* 1596, it makes exactly 70 years and 5 months, which obviously proves that the date of Guru Nanak's birth forwarded by Bhai Santokh Singh is a mistake or a misprint.

Moreover the authorities in favour of *Baisakh* are more reliable. Among these authorities is the very respectable one of Bhai Gur Das himself, who in his *Vars* forwards *Baisakh* as the month of birth. Bhai Mani Singh in his *Gyan Ratnavli*, also forwards the same view. The *Janamsakhi* of Sewa Dass, which is more reliable than any other *Janamsakhi*, mentions *Baisakh*, as the date of Guru Nanak's birth. Moreover, we have a definite proof that till as late as 1815, it was in *Baisakh* that the birth was celebrated by the Sikhs at Nankana, the birth place of Guru Nanak. Obviously, therefore, the Guru must have been born in the month of *Baisakh*.

APPENDIX III

THE PUNJAB UNDER THE MUGHALS, AND THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MUGHALS AND THE SIKH GURUS

The Punjab has always been considered as one of the most important parts of this country. Till very recently, the Punjab remained a key to the Indian Empire. Almost all the invaders—except the British in the modern times, or except Muhammad-bin-Qasim in the medieval times who came to establish their power in this country, entered it through the Punjab. And hence, once a power was established in this country, if it wanted to stem the foreign aggressions, it had to make special arrangements for the protection of the Punjab. That was perhaps one of the reasons that the Mughals too took a very keen interest in the administration of this part of the country.

Moreover, the Punjab being the home of the stalwart *Jats*, and the other races of martial character, it always formed a good recruiting ground and a reservoir of the fighting men. Thirdly, the Mughals themselves having come only from the north-western side of India, and still possessing their vital interests in the countries of Central Asia, they had to have a special hold on the Punjab, in the absence of which there contacts with the countries on the north-west of India should have broken. And fourthly, the Punjab lay on the route to Kashmir, the pride possession of the Mughal monarchs. They often visited this valley during the hot months of summer. Akbar and Jehangir were more specially fond of the virgin beauty of Kashmir, and the nature which appears here in its very naked form. And naturally, therefore, every visit to Kashmir, entailed a visit to the Punjab, and hence a closer interest in this part of the country.

These were the reasons due to which the governorship of this province was considered under the Mughals to be a more privileged position, and the nobles vied with one another to get this prized post. One of the greatest blunders of his career, which ultimately brought about his fall, was committed by Humayun, when he handed over the Punjab to his brother Kamran. When Sher Shah Suri defeated Humayun at Chausa and Kanauj, the very first step taken by him was to consolidate his administration in the Punjab. He constructed a fort at Rohtas, near the river Jhelum. After his death, Sher Shah's successor, Islam Shah, continued giving a special attention towards this part of his country. But after his death, when peace in the Punjab was destroyed, Humayun got an opportunity and re-conquered this country. It was at Kalanaur, in the Punjab, that Akbar was proclaimed as the successor to Humayun.

During the time of Akbar too, (1556—1568) the most serious challenges to his authority, came only from this side. If Bairam had to wage a war against Sikandar Sur; or if Bairam Khan himself entered into an intrigue with Hussain Khan, the governor of the Punjab, and raised a standard of revolt against Akbar, it was all a trouble from within the Punjab. After settling his government, some very special measures were taken to consolidate his power in the Punjab. From 1585, rather, Akbar shifted his head-quarters to the Punjab, and till 1598, whole of the Indian empire continued to be administered mostly from Lahore. The turbulent Afghan tribes formed one of the most serious problems for the safety of the Mughals in India. They claimed many an important Mughal General, and even Bir Bal laid down his life, only while fighting on the North West Frontier. All this added to the importance of Lahore, and it was to meet the N. W. F. problem more effectively, that Akbar transferred his head-quarters to Lahore. During Akbar's stay in the Punjab, he took special measures to introduce reforms against Sati system and the Hindu social disabilities etc.

In the time of Jehangir, (1606—1627) one of the most serious problems of his career was the revolt of his own son !Khusro, who entered the Punjab, and met Guru Arjan. Guru Arjan's contacts with Khusro have already been discussed, and we have seen how they contributed

towards his execution. Murtaza Khan, and Itmad-ud-Daula, the Punjab governors under Jehangir, undertook several reforms in this country. The construction of a road from Lahore to Agra was undertaken, trees were planted on roads and new buildings erected. Jehangir visited the Punjab several times on his way to and from Kashmir, and it was in the Punjab, at Changiz Hatti, that he finally died, being buried at Shahdara, near Lahore, in 1627.

Shah Jehan, after Jehangir, continued taking a close interest in the administration of the Punjab, and visited it for several times, as in 1633 and 1638. When the war of succession started among the sons of Shah Jehan, Dara Shikoh, who had already for sometime been the Governor of this province, fled towards it, and met Guru Har Rai, as we have already discussed.

After Shah Jehan, when Aurangzeb came to power, he shifted the centre of the imperial interest from the Punjab to the Deccan, and this sounded the death knell of the Mughal empire. Rebellions arose in the Punjab. The Sikhs developed their power, the hill chiefs, became refractory, and thus the rot entered which ultimately spread and destroyed the Mughal power.

It is clear thus, that Punjab was always one of the most important parts of the Mughal empire. And since for this period, the history of the Punjab is mainly concerned with the development of the Sikh religion, and the lives and the careers of the Sikh Gurus, it would be interesting to have a brief review of the relations between the Mughals and these Gurus, and see, how with the start of the Mughal period, the Sikh history started. The Punjab formed to the Mughals a source of strength, and to the Sikhs a source of life. And we will see, how when the one failed in giving justice and peace to the country, the other watched, and ultimately rose to destroy the evil and re-assert its independence.

The Relations under Guru Nanak

The relations between the Sikh Gurus and the Mughals have in fact already been dealt with in the chapters concerning the individual Gurus. Here we will make only a brief survey drawing extracts and occasionally referring our readers to the proper chapters inside this book.

With the arrival of Guru Nanak in the Punjab, Babur arrived in this country, and strangely enough, with the death of Guru Gobind Singh, the last of the Sikh Gurus; died Aurangzeb, the last of the strong Mughal emperors. After the death of Aurangzeb, just as the Mughal power in India and in the Punjab, continued to weaken; the Sikh power continued developing and going strong; till ultimately, the first was destroyed and the second established itself from religious movement into a political power.

Guru Gobind Singh writes in his *Bachitra Natak* : from one side came Babur, and from the other side came Guru Nanak, the clash was immanent, as the Almighty Himself had desired :

“ਬਾਬੇ ਕੇ, ਬਾਬਰ ਕੇ ਦਰੁ, ਆਪ ਕਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਸਰ ਸਰੁ”

During his Fifth *Udasi*, as we have studied (p. 72), the Guru was imprisoned by the Mughal soldiers at Sayedpur, and condemned to manual labour and was asked to carry a load on his head. But the load was noticed to be moving with the Guru one cubit above his head without any support. The incident was immediately reported to Babur, who, according to old Sikh records, himself came to see, and was impressed as a result of a conversation with the Guru. He ordered the Guru's release, but the Guru refused unless others were released along with him. Thereupon, Babur ordered all to be set at liberty.

There is no mention of the Guru's meeting with Babur in the contemporary Mughal records. But there is a possibility that the Guru, whose heart ached at the sight of the horrors and destruction brought about by the invader, should have personally interviewed him, though the incident might have been passed by the Mughals as insignificant.

Babur occupied the power in India in 1526, as a result of his battle with the Lodhis at Panipat. But before this he led several invasions into this country, and brought about much destruction and bloodshed in the Punjab. In 1520, when entire garrison at Sayedpur was destroyed by the Mughals in cold blood, and the inhabitants of the place were butchered and carried away into slavery, Guru Nanak wept the tears of blood and wrote : Wealth and beauty of the women proved to be their bane,

and they were forcibly taken away and dishonoured (See p. 8). And again he said :

"When Babur's rule was proclaimed no one could eat his food. .

If a powerful person were to attack another powerful person, there shall be no anger in my mind.

But if a ferocious lion falls upon a herd of cattle, the master of the herd should show his manliness. (See p. 107)

Here 'master of the herd' signifies Lodhis, and the Guru condemned them in the most naked words, when they failed in protecting the people against the invader.

It is clear thus, as the Mughals entered into this country to bring about destructions and religious persecutions, the Sikh Gurus came to resist them and preach the message of peace. The clash between the two was immanent, as Guru Gobind Singh has been quoted above.

Guru Angad (1538—1552)

After Guru Nanak, Guru Angad acceded to the pontificate, and after Babur, Humayun came to power. It is said, after being defeated by Sher Shah Suri, Humayun being obliged to flee from Hindustan, decided to see the wonder-working Guru on his way out. At the time of Humayun's visit, the Guru was in deep trance and Humayun was kept standing. This enraged him and he tried to draw out his sword to sever the Guru's head. The sword, however, would not come out of the scabbard, which made the fugitive Emperor repentant of his haste; and the Guru reproached him that the sword which should have been used against Sher Shah, Humayun tried to draw it on the priests of God; and despite his reverses the Emperor had not been able to win over his false pride. Dr. Bannerji considers the very fact of the Emperor's visit as very doubtful. But there seems to be no reason to disbelieve the story, though we may not give a credit to its details. (See p. 118). And it is obvious that had the Guru not kept his patience, the first Sikh martyrdom should have occurred there and then.

Guru Amar Das (1552-1574)

About four years after the pontification of Guru Amar Das, Akbar

came to power as an emperor of India. Akbar possessed the spirit of religious toleration, and so long as he ruled, the relations between the Mughals and the Sikh Gurus remained very cordial and friendly. As we have already discussed (pp. 132-134). Guru Amar Das had prayed for the success of Akbar in his expedition on Chittor and Akbar was successful. During one of his periodical visits to Lahore, Akbar made a detour to Goindwal, and accompanied by a large escort, paid a state visit to the Guru. He observed the rule, and before having an interview with the Guru, he is said to have partaken of food from the *langar*. Being pleased with the refuge that the Guru's kitchen afforded to a large number of people, Akbar requested the Guru to ask for the grant of land as he desired. The Guru, however, refused as repeatedly as he was asked. Akbar thereupon granted some villages to Bibi Bhani, the Guru's daughter and subsequently Bhai Budha is said to have been appointed by the Guru to manage the property.

This time Akbar lay encamped along with his large escort at Lahore for a long time. As a result of this, the prices at Lahore and in the adjoining areas arose and the peasants suffered. When the next harvest was ready, Akbar prepared to march off, leaving behind a strong possibility of sudden fall in the prices to ruin the peasants. The Guru is said to have sent a request to Akbar who remitted the whole land-tax for the year.

In connection with the Guru's relations with Akbar, several other stories are told by the Sikh chronicler. It is said that at Goindwal, the Guru did not have a very peaceful time. The city of Goindwal had been founded by a man named Gonda Marwaha, who was a staunch follower of the Guru, and at whose invitation, the Guru had settled there. The activities of the Guru at Goindwal were not looked upon with any sympathy by some Khatris and Brahmins of the place, who made a common cause, and after Gonda's death, incited his son to make a petition to the Emperor against an alleged illegal occupation of some land by the Guru. The Emperor invited the Guru to explain his case personally and favour him with his sight. The Guru, however, excused himself for his old age and sent Jetha to deputise in his behalf.

Jetha presented the case effectively, and the petition of the opponents was rejected. After this, the Emperor took Jetha aside and told him to request the Guru to make a pilgrimage to the Ganges. He told him that the Guru's activities had administered a blow on the prestige of Brahmins, and some Hindus felt that he wanted to destroy their religion and age-old beliefs and practices. The pilgrimage would divert the wrath of the Hindus. The Emperor also promised to issue orders that no Pilgrim's tax should be levied on the Guru's party.

The most important authority for the above written account is Suraj Prakash, which was written about three centuries after the Guru's death. Jetha, who later became Guru Ram Das, has left us a contemporary account that the Gonda's son, "The perverse man sent his servant to slander and backbite others, but the result was that the faces of both were blackened." But he nowhere mentions the authority to whom the petition was made, and the whole story of a petition to the Emperor seems therefore to be a concoction on the known acquaintance between the Guru and the Emperor, although it is difficult to understand Dr. Bannerji's arguments against the opponents of the Guru coming together and making a common cause against him (See pp. 134-35 of this book).

After Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das came to power. We have already studied above, how Jetha who later became Guru Ram Das, visited the court of Akbar. The friendly relations between Akbar and Guru Ram Das continued.

Guru Arjan (1581-1606)

Akbar continued being the emperor of India, even when Guru Arjan came to the pontificate. And so long as he lived, his friendly relations with Guru Arjan continued. We have already studied, how the enemies of the Guru, tried to poison the ears of Akbar against him. Prithia incited both the Kazis and Brahmins, telling them that the Guru had blasphemed both Muslims and the Hindus in his newly compiled Granth. They both lay a complaint against the Guru, and their memorial was duly placed before the Emperor, through the influence of Chandu. At the Emperor's order, the Guru deputed Bhai Budha

and Bhai Gurdas to take the Granth before him, and they were able to convince the Emperor that the complaint against the Guru was groundless ; whereafter they were both dismissed by the Emperor with dresses of honour for their Guru and for themselves.

Dr. Bannerji has characterised the above story as doubtful of occurrence in the absence of independent reliable testimony. But although there is no independent testimony in regard to this story which is based only on tradition, there is a similar story told at another place, where a complaint was presented in the Emperor's court by Sulahi Khan, together with Prithia, against the Guru, but which was rejected as the Emperor would not interfere in the affairs of the religious men. And regarding this we have a strong testimony in the shape of the Guru's own words, who says :

*"The blind fool told lies in the true court,
And smote his head with his hands.
They who commit sin contract disease.
God himself sat as the judge.
Prithia is involved in the consequences of his own acts ;
All his wealth shall pass away with his life."*

This clearly proves that the incidents of complaints going to the Emperor were by no means improbable, and in regard to the story referred to by Dr. Bannerji, if there is no independent testimony in its favour, there is no definite argument against it as well. A tradition can not be rejected merely because it is a tradition, when there are no proofs to falsify it.

The tradition continues, the discomfiture of the conspirators became complete when the Emperor not only rejected the complaint, he rather also promised to go to visit the Guru when he was returning from Lahore whither he was then proceeding. And that the Emperor actually paid a visit to the Guru is corroborated by Badauni, who according to Macauliffe "states that on another occasion, namely, the thirteenth of the month Azur (Jamadi ul sani), Akbar, with a gorgeous military retinue, crossed the Bias and went to Goindwal to visit Guru Arjan, whose teaching and character he appreciated," And the Khulasatut-Twarikh

writes that a small portion of revenue was also remitted by Akbar, at the request of the Guru, though the Sikh tradition says that revenue of whole of the Punjab was remitted for the year due to the famine conditions that prevailed.

Akbar's visit to the Guru must be regarded as the high water-mark of the Guru's career from the secular point of view. This gave him an added prestige and facilitated the further propagation of his faith.

Unfortunately, however, the tolerant Emperor Akber died soon after this, and was succeeded by his fanatic son Jehangir, under whom the conspirators against the Guru got a full chance which resulted in the Guru's execution. The causes, the facts and the results of the execution of Guru Arjan, at the hands of Jehangir have already been discussed in detail, and for this the reader is referred to the Chapter X of this book.

The Rest of the Sikh Gurus

After Guru Arjan, Guru Hargobind succeeded to the pontificate. A detailed study of his relations with Jehangir and Shah Jehan has already been made in the Chapter XII, and it has been discussed how the Guru assumed the role of a military leader, organised an army, was imprisoned, but later fought battles with the Mughals, in which he was almost always successful.

In the time of Guru Har Rai, the friendly relations with Shah Jehan started once again, and it has been discussed (pp. 227—230) how the Emperor approached the Guru for a medicine, which being supplied, the emperor was pleased. Soon, however, the Guru was suspected of having helped Dara against Aurangzeb, and when the latter came to power, the bitterness started once again.

When Guru Har Krishan came to the pontificate, he was called by Aurangzeb to Delhi. We have seen under what circumstances the Guru went to Delhi, and died during his visit at that place (See pp. 233—235) Teg Bahadur, who became Guru after the death of Har Krishan, was also called by Aurangzeb at Delhi, where he was ultimately executed (See pp.

239, 241-251). Here was one more turning point in the history of the Punjab, which completely transformed the Sikhs from saints, into saint-soldiers. Under Guru Gobind Singh, the Khalsa faith was founded, and the clash between the Sikhs and the Mughals became open (See Chapters XVI, XVII and XVIII). This clash developed in the time of Banda Bahadur, Nawab Kapur Singh and Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, and the Mughel power was ultimately destroyed, and the Sikhs established themselves in the Punjab, as a sovereign State.

INDEX

A

- Abdulla, *faujdar*—215.
 Abdulla Shah—213.
 Abdul Rehman—362-63.
 Abdul Samad Khan—334-35, 337, 342, 345, 348, 349.
 Abdus Samad Khan, Sarhind governor—412.
 Abdul—200.
 Achal Batala—73.
 Adi Granth—50, 52, 79, 80, 89, 90, 102, 111, 114, 119, 120, 123, 143, 158, 160, 161, 167, 169, 170, 171, 174, 175-175.
 Its necessity —175-177.
 Collection—177-181. Authors—181-182. Arrangement—182-185. Contents & Importance —185-195, 218, 229-30, 247, 307, 318, 350.
 Adina Beg—367, 387-88, 390-91, 393, 394, 406, 407-8, 409, 412-14. Life and achievements 415-427.
 Ahmad Shah Abdali (or Durrani)—106, 175, 279, 341. Ist invasion 377-79, 386. 2nd invasion 389. Third invasion 392-94, 400. Fourth invasion 404-407. Fifth 429-436. Sixth 440-446. Seventh 451-52. Eighth 454-56. Ninth 457. Tenth 458. Estimate and failure 459-464.
 Ahom—240.
 Ajit Singhis—346-47.
 Akal Takhat (or Akal Bunga)—200, 221, 357.
 Akalis—348, 495-97.
 Akbar—103, 129, 132-35, 141, 142, 143, 161-62, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 185, 211, 220, 269.
 Akil Das, Mahant—396, 424, 440.
 Ala Singh—358, 406, 433, 449, 451-52, 453, 508-510.
 Alaf Khan—270-272, 273, 280, 297.
 Alam Chand—277-78, 295.
 Alam Khan Lodhi—6, 9, 10.
 Alam Singh—294.
 Ali Khan—7.
 Alim—184.
 Almast—209, 217.
 Amar Das, Guru—26, 82, 103, 105. Life and Achievements 126-

139, 142, 146, 149, 155, 159,
163, 176, 177, 181, 182, 218,
219, 321.

Amro Bibi—127.

Amritsar—70, 142-144, 152, 153,
154, 157, 168, 175, 177, 185,
199, 209, 210, 214, 215, 223,
238, 332, 353, 354, 357, 362-
63, 368-9, 379-81, 406, 413,
438, 443-444, 445, 451, 452.

Amar Singh—453, 456, 510.

Anandpur—239, 245-46, 257, 264-
65, 268, 269, 271, 274, 279,
283. First Battle of, 293-96.
Second battle of, 294. Third
battle of, 297-98. Fourth
battle of 298-99. Fifth battle
of 299-301, 309, 318, 326.

Anantananda—38.

Angad, *Guru*—74, 75, 89, 108. Life
and Achievements 115-125,
127, 159, 163, 164, 165, 166,
177, 181, 182.

Ani Rai—206, 228.

Arjun, *Guru*—80, 83, 85, 88, 105,
107, 119, 137, 146. Life, 149-
153. Achievements 153-162
Execution 163-174. *Adi*
Granth 175-195, 196, 197,
198, 199, 204, 211, 218, 220,
227, 232, 233, 250, 252, 281,
285, 321.

Atal Rai—206, 218, 226.

Atka, Hussan Beg—8.

Aurangzeb—227, 228-31, 233-35,

243-51, 252, 256, 257, 260,
269, 275, 277, 291, 296, 298,
300, 303, 305, 311, 316-17,
351.

B

Babur—5, 7. Invasions 7-11,
Sayadpur resistance 8. At
Depalpur 9. Battle of Panipat
and occupation of Delhi 10,
12, 20, 72-73, 107, 111, 164,
192, 276, 291-92.

Bachitra Natak—88, 89, 146, 243,
251, 254, 255, 257, 265, 267,
269, 271, 273, 275, 276, 280,
289, 312, 318, 319, 320.

Badr Singh—466.

Bahadur Shah—275-77, 306-307,
308, 325, 333-34.

Baisakhi—283, 349, 355.

Baj Singh—325, 329, 338, 347.

Bakala—235, 236, 237.

Bakht Mal—215.

Bala, *Bhai*—47-48, 60-61.

Balia—277-278, 295.

Ball—181, 182.

Balu Hasan—217.

Balwand—118, 182.

Banda Bahadur—95, 106, 145, 250,
306. Career and Achievements
323-344 Failure 343-344, 345,
347-49 354.

Bandeis—343, 347-349, 361.

Banno—175.

Bara Ghalughara—440-43.

Barath—157.

Barbhag Singh—411.
 Basali, battle of—296-97.
 Basarka—128.
 Bawa Wali—72.
 Beg, Mirza—276.
 Behar Khan Lodhi—9.
 Behlol Lodhi—3.
 Bein—55.
 Benaras—66, 105, 239, 320.
 Beni—181.
 Bhag Bhari—209.
 Bhag Singh—472.
 Bhagat Bhagwan—232.
 Bhagel Singh—498.
 Bhago, *Malik*—63, 112.
 Bhagwana—215.
 Bhagwan Singh—498.
 Bhalhau—181.
 Bhana, Bhai—218.
 Bhangani, Battle of—257-269.
 Bhangar Nath—73.
 Bhani *Bibi*—132, 141, 142, 146, 149.
 Bharthari—50.
 Bhau—430-34.
 Bhavananda—38.
 Bhika—181.
 Bhikhan—181.
 Bhikhari Khan—398.
 Bhim Chand—253, 260-264, 265,
 266-268, 270, 271-72, 274, 293-
 95, 296, 299.
 Bidhi Chand—198, 199, 208, 215,
 216, 217.
 Binod Singh—325, 336, 337, 357.
 Bir Bal—167-68.

Bodhan Brahman, story of—4-5.
 Bota Singh, Bhai—martyrdom, 367-
 68.
 Brahm Das—68.
 Braj Singh—362-363.
 Buddha, *Bhai*—74, 117, 132, 150,
 161, 177, 185, 196, 200, 202,
 212, 218, 450, 452.
 Budha Dal—357, 358, 385, 447.
 Budha Singh—494.
 Budhu Shah, Pir—256, 264, 318,
 327.

C

Ceylon—67-68. Nanak's visit
 105.
 Chaitanya—31, 32. Life and
 Teachings 43-44, 102.
 Chamkaur—291. First battle of
 297, 301. Second battle of
 302-3, 318, 327.
 Chandu—105, 161, 166, 167, 169,
 171, 203-204, 205, 206, 208-209
 (Death).
 Chappar Chiri, battle of—328.
 Charat Singh—380, 403, 437, 438,
 450, 451, 453, 501-503.
 Charpat—50.
 Chhaju—167, 180.
 Chhota Ghalughara—373-76.
 China—69-70, 108.

D

Dadan Khan—456.
 Dal Khalsa—357, 382-84. Consti-
 tution etc. 395.

- Dallewal, fortress—366, 467.
 Damdama—305.
 Dara Shikoh—227, 228-29.
 Darbara Singh, Bhai—352, 353, 355, 356.
 Dasu—128, 166.
 Dattanand—314.
 Datu—128, 166.
 Daulat Khan Lodhi—5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 54, 60.
 Daya Singh—101.
 Daya Singh—294, 303.
 Dera Baba Nanak—157.
 Desa Singh Bhangi—476.
 Devindar Singh—512.
 Dhanna—38, 181, 194.
 Dharam Singh—303, 306.
 Dhir Mal—218, 231, 238, 239, 281, 347.
 Dilawar Khan—7, 10, 272-73, 275-80.
 Dina Beg—293.
 Dip Singh, Baba—357, 403, 410-11.
 Duni Chand—259.
 Durrani—175.

E

- Ek Nath—44.

F

- Farid Shakar Ganj—50, 67, 179, 180, 181, 183, 187, 189.
 Fateh Chand—261-63, 264, 267-68.
 Fateh Singh—472.
 Forty Muktas—301, 304, 327.
 Furrukh Siyar—334, 342, 345.

G

- Gajpat Singh—511.
 Ganda Singh Bhangi—475.
 Ganga—181.
 Ganga, Mata—202.
 Gangu Shahis—346.
 Garma, Pind 441.
 Ghanaya, Bhai—317-318.
 Ghani Khan—303.
 Gian Singh—498.
 Gobindpur—154.
 Gobind Singh, Guru—82, 88, 89, 101, 102, 104, 105, 106, 108, 109, 130, 144, 147, 156, 164, 175, 201, 202, 227, 240, 243, 245, 250, 251. Before creation of Khalsa 252-278. Creation of Khalsa 279-292. After Khalsa 293-311. Character Estimate 255, 312-22. Relations with Mughals 304-308. Personal qualities 308-10, Durga worship 314-16, 324-25, 348, 350, 361.
 Goindwal—128, 131, 132, 133, 134, 141, 149, 162, 170, 177.
 Golab Singh Bhangi—479.
 Golab Singh Dulewala—497.
 Gonda—217.
 Gonda Marwaha—133.
 Gopal, raja of Guler—247-75.
 Gopichand—50.
 Gorakhmata or Nanakmata—66, 209, 224.
 Gorakhnath—50, 210.
 Govind Bhagwatpada—33.

Gujar Singh—452-53, 456.
 Gujri—236, 239, 300-301, 361.
 Gumtala—214.
 Gurbakash Singh Kanheya—491.
 Gurdas Bhai—6, 12, 21, 46, 47, 49,
 61-62, 73, 93, 105, 119, 145,
 146, 161, 175, 177, 202, 203,
 205, 217, 220.
 Gurdas Nangal—335-336, 337.
 Gurdit Singh Bhangi—480
 Gurditta—206, 216, 217, 218, 224,
 226, 227.
Gurmata—106.
 Gurmukhi, invention of alphabet—
 120, 122, 163.
 Guru—30, 31, 34, 37, 41, 56-59,
 87-89 (Position in Sikhism).
 Guru Murad—56-58, 72.
 Gwalior—203, 204, 208, 225, 241,
 249.

H

Haidri Flag, crusade—332, 363.
 Haqiqat Rai—369-70.
 Hamir Singh—358, 512.
 Handalias—346.
 Hardwar—65, 113, 135.
 Hardy—51, 53.
 Hargobind, *Guru*—105, 108, 130,
 144, 146-147, 152, 153, 154,
 161, 166, 173, 196-226, The
 changes 196-203. Imprison-
 ment 203-205, the period
 205-207, the release 207-226,
 228, 236, 242, 250, 255, 281,
 282, 321.

Haribans—181.
 Hari Chand—253.
 Hari Singh Bhangi—380, 403, 438,
 473.
 Har Krishan—232. Life and career
 233-35, 236, 254.
 Harmandar—144, 153, 199, 200,
 221, 222.
 Har Rai, *Guru*—218, 226. Life
 and career 227-232, 233, 234,
 254, 506-507.
 Hema Chaudhri—159.
 Hem Kund—283, 314.
 Hira Singh Nakai—497.
 Humayun—117-118, 164-65.
 Hussain Khan—274, 277.

I

Ibrahim Lodhi—5, 7, 8, 9, 10.

J

Jahan Khan—392, 400, 406-7, 410-
 14, 428, 429, 447, 455, 456.
 Jai Dev—181.
 Jaidev—79.
 Jai Ram—54.
 Jai Singh Kanheya—438, 489-492.
 Jaita, Bhai—250.
 Jait Pirana—231.
 Jalalabad—330-31.
 Jalal Khan—5.
 Jalal-ud-Din of Samana—326-27.
 Jalap—181.
 Jallau—181.
 Jarchi Karim Khan—429, 435.
 Jaspat Rai—360, 370, 373-74.

Jaswant Singh—512.

Jat—18, 108, 213, 221, 257, 310, 321.

Jawahir Singh—454.

Jazia—1, 11.

Jehangir—162, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 204, 205, 206-209, 210-11, 212.

Jetha—133-135, 140, 141, 198.

Jhanda Singh Bhangi—473-75.

Jiwan Bhai—250.

Jiwan Singh—291.

Jnaneswar—44.

Jodh Singh—488.

Jodh Singh—499.

Jujhar, expedition of—275.

Jussa Singh, Ahluwalia—317, 357, 380, 382-84, 386, 393, 394, 422, 438, 439, 466-72.

Jussa Singh Thoka (Ramgarhia)—388, 403, 417, 418, 481-88.

K

Ka'aba—70-71, 113.

Kabir—12, 21, 27, 31, 32. Life and teachings 38-43, 50, 57, 59, 66, 81, 102, 124, 179, 180, 181, 183, 187.

Kabuli Mal—450, 452.

Kahna—167, 180.

Kahn Singh—325, 336, 347, 348, 357.

Kailash Parbat—69.

Kal—181.

Kala Khan—216.

Kalas—181.

Kalashar—181.

Kalu—51, 52, 54.

Kamrup—66-67, 240.

Kapur Singh, *Nawab*—317, 352. Life and achievements 355-354, 493-94.

Karam—211.

Karmo—151-152.

Karoon—71.

Karori—68.

Karor Singh—498.

Kartarpur—68, 73, 103, 113, 116, 117, 175, 209, 215, 216, 218, 223.

Kartarpur near Jullundur—154, 157, 236.

Kashmiri Brahmins—245.

Kashmir—68-69, 104.

Kaulan—206, 212-13.

Kaulsar—206.

Kaura Mal—372, 374, 376, 388, 390-91, 392-93, 419-20.

Kehlur—217, 238, 261, 264-65, 296-97, 298, 299, 334.

Keshgarh—279, 283.

Khadur—115, 117, 124, 127, 164.

Khalsa—108, 125, 144, 145, 260. Creation of 279-292, 321, 350, 356.

Khanzada, expedition of—272-73.

Khechar—44.

Khem Karan—360.

Kheri—301.

Khidrana, the battle of—301, 303-304, 327.

Khivi—115.
 Khushal Singh—494.
 Khusro—168, 169, 170, 211.
 Khwaja Abdula Khan—400.
 Khwaja Mirza Khan—369-400.
 Kirat—181.
 Kiratpur—217, 225, 231, 238, 334.
 Kirpal, Mahant—264.
 Kirpal of Kutoch—264, 270, 274-75.
 Koka, Mirza Aziz—168.
 Kukas—147.
 Kup—440-42.
 Kurukshetra—64-65, 82, 134, 139.

L

Ladakh—70.
 Ladha Bhai—118-119.
 Lakhmidas—53.
 Lakhpat Rai—359, 360, 370, 372, 373-76, 417.
 Lalo—63, 105.
 Langaha—198.
 Langar—73, 103, 123, 128-129, 132, 157, 163, 322.
 Lehira—215.
 Lehna Singh—452-53, 455, 456, 476-79.
 Lehna, Bhai—74, 108, 114-117.
 Lodhis—107, 164, 192, 292.
 Lohgarh—200, 214, 223, 333, 341.
 Luharipa—50.

M

Maan Singh, Raja—168.
 Machhander—50.

Machhiwara—106, 303, 308, 309.
 Madho Rao—454.
 Maha Singh—503-506.
 Mahadev—149-151.
 Mahan Singh—304.
 Mahant Singh—348.
 Makhan Shah—237-38.
 Malhar Rao—412-14, 454.
 Manak Chand of Virowal—131-132.
 Mani and Jani—448.
 Mani Singh, Bhai—175, 349, 360-62, 363.
 Manji System—105, 129-130, 155, 163.
 Mansarovar—69.
 Man Singh—303.
 Manupur—379.
 Marathas in Punjab—412-14. Adina under Marathas 423-425.
 Maratha exclusion from Punjab 428-434.
 Mardana—60, 61, 62, 63, 66, 67, 72, 82.
 Masand system—105, 145, 155-157, 164, 199, 231, 280-81.
 Massa Rangar—368-9.
 Mathura—181.
 Mati Das, Bhai—108.
 Mecca—70-72, 113, 114.
 Medina—71.
 Medni Prakash—262-63, 266, 267.
 Mehrban—49, 146-147, 152, 211, 281.
 Mehtab Singh—368-69.
 Minas—281, 347.

- Mira Bai—181.
 Mir, Mian—171, 213, 225.
 Misls—357, 382-84 (organised),
 465-512. Misl Organisation
 513.
 Mohan—141, 158, 166, 177-179.
 Mohar Singh Nishanwala—494-95.
 Mohri—141, 166, 177.
 Mughals—107, 108, 111, 145, 148,
 155, 157, 164, 165, 166, 201,
 211, 212, 217, 219, 220, 221,
 222, 252, 268, 280. Mughal
 Army 310-11, 318, 343, 350-51.
 Mughlani Begum—397-409.
 Muhammad Shah—364-66.
 Muin-ul-Mulk (or Mir Mannu) —
 379. The Punjab governor
 386-96, 397, 418-23.
 Mukatsar—304, 308.
 Mukhlis Khan—216, 228.
 Mukhlispur—330.
 Mul Chand—60.

N

- Nabi Khan—303.
 Nadaun, the battle of—269-272,
 280.
 Nadir Shah's Invasion—364-66. His
 enquiry 366-66, 377.
 Nahr Singh—299.
 Nahr Singh Nakai—498.
 Najib-ud-daula—451, 453, 454,
 455, 456, 457, 461.
 Nal—182.
 Nam Dev—12, 32. Life and tea-
 chings 44-45, 50, 80, 181,

182, 187.

- Nanak, Guru, writings of—3, 4,
 5-6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 21, 23, 32.
 Sources 46-50. Early life
 50-61. Udasis 61-73. Last
 years 73-75. His Teachings 76-
 97. Character Estimate 98-114.
 His Guru 56-59, 115, 116, 127,
 129, 140, 147, 159, 163, 164,
 165, 180, 181, 183, 189, 209,
 221, 222, 224, 225, 230, 276,
 282, 285, 291-92, 321, 350.

Nand Chand—264-65, 277.

Nander—307, 308, 324, 327.

Nand Singh—481, 482.

Nanki Bibi—114, 204.

Narhari—38.

Nasir Khan—390, 393.

Natha Mal—200.

New Terms—359-60.

Niranjanias—346.

Nirmala School—321, 347.

Nirmoh, the battle of—295-296.

Nityananda—102.

O

- Obed Khwaja—436, 437-39.

P

Padmavati—38.

Pahul, Khande Ka—285-89
 (Amrit), 322, 346.

Painde Khan—293.

Painde Khan—198, 216.

Pakpatan—67, 72.

Panipat—65-66 Third battle of
430-34.

Panj Piyaras—283-286, 302-3.

Parma Nand—181.

Patna—239, 240, 252.

Paunta—257, 263, 264, 266.

Phagwara—217.

Pheru—115.

Phul—217.

Phul—231, 507-8.

Phulkian—231, 277, 358.

Piara—198.

Pilo—167, 180, 181.

Pipa—38, 181.

Pirana—198.

Prayag—82, 239.

Prithi Mal—146, 149-153, 155,
157, 160-161, 165, 166, 171,
176, 211, 281.

Punja Sahib—72.

Q

Qamr-ud-din—372, 378-9.

Qasim Khan—399.

R

Rad—182.

Raghavananda—37.

Raghunath Rao—412.

Rai Bular—54.

Raidasa—38.

Raja Ram—260.

Rakhi System, circumstances
394-401, the system and conse-
quences 401-404, 429, 457.

Ramananda—27, 31 Life and

Teachings 36-38, 39, 79, 102,
181.

Ramanuj—32, Life and Teachings
35-36.

Ramdas—181.

Ram Das, *Guru*—88, 89, 92, 93,
94, 105, 133, 137, 139. Life
and Achievements 140-148, 149
150-151, 155, 159, 165, 166,
181, 182, 183, 238.

Ram Singh Kuka—147.

Ram Rai—229, 233, 234, 239, 243,
262, 263, 281, 347.

Ram Rauni—380-81, 387-88, 401,
419, 424, 483, 484.

Ram Singh—231, 277, 508.

Ram Singh, Mirza Raja—240, 326.

Ranjit Deo—452.

Ranjit Singh, Maharaja—95, 106,
503, 506.

Ran Singh—498.

Ratan Rai—260-61.

Rattan Chand—215.

Rav Das—90.

Rustam Khan, Kazi—212.

S

Sabaji—428.

Sadah—158.

Sada Kaur—492-93.

Sadhaura—327, 330, 333, 341.

Sadhna—181.

Safdar Jung—379, 388, 390-91.

Sahari Mal—149.

Sahib Chand—296.

- Sahib Deva, *Mata*—105.
 Sahib Kaur, *Mata*—285, 287, 301.
 Sahib Singh—511.
 Saida Khan—298, 311.
 Saina—38.
 Saiyad Beg—297.
 Sajjan Thug—63-64, 105 (Sheikh), 114.
 Sal—182.
 Salabat Khan—380.
 Samad Khan—363.
 Samana—326-27, 343.
 Sangtia—274-75.
 Sangat Singh Nishanwala 494.
 Sangat System—104-106, 163, 282, 285, 322.
 Sant Singh—303.
 Sarbat Khalsa—383.
 Sarhind—296, 299, 301, 326, 327-30, 340, 343, 412-13, 436, 440, 448-49, 451.
 Sarsa—301.
 Satsang—84, 104.
 Satta—118, 182.
 Seid Hussain—57, 59.
 Sein—181.
 Sena Narhari—44.
 Sewa Singh, Bhai—209.
 Shah Behlol—71-72.
 Shah Daula—209.
 Shah Hussain—167, 180.
 Shahid gunj—387.
 Shah Jehan—166, 211-217, 227, 228.
 Shah nawaz Khan—372-76, Governor of Punjab. 376-379, 387, 388, 390-91, 417-18.
 Shankar Acharya—24, 27, 31, Life and Teachings}31-35.
 Sheikh Brahm—67, 72.
 Sher Afghan—245. .
 Sher Singh—299.
 Sikandar Lodhi—3-4, 6, 39.
 Sis Ganj—241.
 Sobha Singh—452-53.
 Sodhis—146, 147, 236, 238.
 Srichand—53, 108, 114, 124, 135, 145, 157, 160, 165.
 Suchanand Dewan—328.
 Suchanand, Khatri—301.
 Suda Singh—495.
 Sufis—39.
 Sukha—38.
 Sukha Singh, Mari Kamboh—362-63, 368-9, 380.
 Sukhjiwan Mal—394, 444.
 Sulahi Khan—151, 160, 161.
 Sultanpur—54-65 Guru Nanak at.
 Sunder Das—137, 142, 182.
 Sundri Mata—301, 339, 340, 346-47, 348, 361, 466.
 Suraj Mal—206.
 Suraj Mal—226.
 Surbuland Khan—435, 450, 451.
 Sur Das—181.
 Sursura—38.
 Syedpur—8, 62-63, 72.
- T**
- Talwandi—51, 54, 61.
 Tara Chand—215.

- Tara Chand, raja—217.
 Taran Taran—154, 157, 159.
 Tara Singh Bhai, martyrdom—
 351-53.
 Tara Singh Dalewala—497.
 Taruna Dal—357, 385, 447, 450,
 452.
 Taru Singh—370-71.
 Tat Khalsa—343, 347-49, 361.
 Tattar Khan—6.
 Teg Bahadur, Guru—82, 104, 108,
 174, 181, 185, 226, 232. Life
 and Achievements, 236-51, 252,
 253, 254, 281.
 Tibet—69-70.
Tikke Di Var, (Coronation Ode)
 118-119, 128.
 Tilok Singh—231, 277, 326, 512.
 Timur—406-7. Punjab governor
 410-414.
 Trilochan—181, 187.
 Tripta—51.
 Tuka Ram—44.
 Tulsidasa—38.
- U**
- Uchh Ka Pir*—303.
 Udasi—48, 123-124, 135-136, 145,

- 163, 209, 264, 347.
 Udhe Singh—278, 294.

V

- Vallabhacharya—102.
 Viro Bibi—214.

W

- Wadali—152.
 Wazir Khan—214, 217, 225,
 327-30.
 Wazir Khan (of Sarhind)—296,
 299, 301, 304, 308, 326.

Y

- Yahia Khan, governor—372-76,
 417-18.
 Yar Khan—206.

Z

- Zabardast Khan—299.
 Zafarnamah—202, 301, 302, 303,
 305.
 Zain Khan—436, 440, 441, 448.
 Zakariya Khan—337, 345, 349,
 352, 354, 355-372, 417.
 Zamzama gun—437, 453.
 Zimmi—1.



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